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CDXC - The UK DX Foundation

Issue 104

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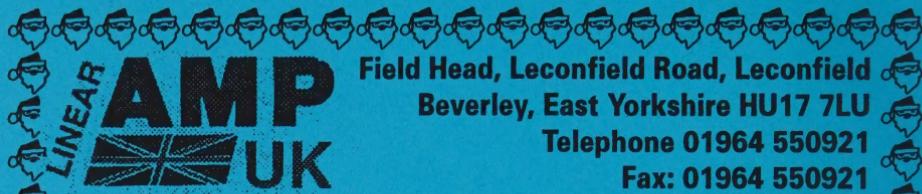
CHILTERN DX CLUB - The UK DX Foundation - Aims and Objectives

"The aims of the Club are to promote HF operating, to encourage excellence, particularly in DXing and contest operating, through mutual assistance and by encouraging support of DXpeditions, the issue of achievement awards, or by whatever other means is deemed to be appropriate".

Membership: Full details of membership are available from the Club Secretary (address above).

Subscriptions: The annual subscription is currently set at £12.00 for UK members, and £17.00 for overseas members. The subscription for new members joining between 1st January and 30th June is 50% of the annual subscription. Subscriptions become due on July 1st in each year, and should be sent to the Treasurer (address above).

Newsletter: This Newsletter is published six times per year. Articles for publication should be sent to the Newsletter Editor (address above) by the published deadline. *Please note that opinions expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Committee.*



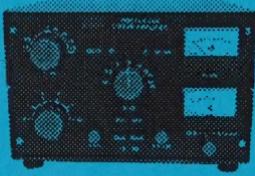
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EDITORIAL

Brendan J McCartney, G4DYO

A

Happy Christmas
to all readers
from editor Bren
and XYL Ruth

With the July Newsletter Neville, G3NUG, circulated a letter dealing with, among other matters, the special event callsign for the HFC. I immediately wrote to the coordinator - David Hill, G4IQM - offering my services. The day before my agreed "stint", in mid-September, the news broke that the RA had decreed that the special call would be authorised for use only at Windsor during the weekend of the HF Convention and not from individual stations, as on previous occasions. Later, David wrote explain-

ing "...the RA intend to strictly enforce the rules relating to special event stations." The rule in question appears to be that requiring stations using special callsigns to be open to the public. What is the purpose of such a ludicrous restriction? Given that amateurs are required by law to operate within their licence regulations, there is no sensible reason why they should not be permitted to use any callsign within the blocks allocated for their use, providing that the issue of such callsigns is properly administered by a competent authority (locating a "competent authority" in the UK might well be the problem). Remember that CBers may use ANY callsign they choose, without restriction, yet Radio Amateurs, who have to undertake courses of study and City & Guilds examinations appear to be hog-tied by ridiculous bureaucracy.

To accept that the RA, which exists to formulate licence regulations, and administer the allocation of frequencies in the radio spectrum in accordance with international and national legislation, should be concerned with a matter as trivial as the precise location for the use of special callsigns, would be preposterous. Is this truly the sort of restriction a government department in a (supposedly) free country dreams up? I simply do not believe that we amateurs are aware of the true reasons for such restrictions.

On what grounds does the RA rule that amateur stations using special callsigns must be open to the general public? Amateurs in many other countries - some with more repressive governments than the UK - have, for many years, enjoyed the privilege of using special calls without such petty restrictions. The Canadians are particularly well off, with their authorities frequently authorising the use of special callsigns; there is even a special award for working Canadian prefixes. In the UK we are supposed to accept special calls from the RA as some sort of Gift from Above, but even when they

deign to issue special calls they can't get it right. Remember the farce of M1OOG? It should have been Mike One Zero Zero Golf to celebrate 100 years of radio - an event which would occur just once in entire the history of the Universe - but we were told that the RA would not approve the use of that callsign. Given that plenty of "three number prefixes" had been issued in the past, which mindless individual at the RA decreed that it should be Mike One Oscar Oscar Golf? Is the RA really to blame, or could it be that the RSGB, which should be fighting tooth and nail for such privileges, accepts the restrictions without question, or possibly encourages them? Ten years ago, when I became the editor of DXNS, I asked a member of RSGB Council why G stations did not enjoy the special callsign privileges of so many of their amateur friends in other countries. "*The QSL Bureau couldn't cope, Old Boy*", was the reply (Note: No mention of RA restrictions). Can you believe that?

The callsign authorised for use at the HF and IOTA Convention was GB32OTA. Why GB32OTA, which means nothing to a DXer or IOTA-chaser? For past pre-convention publicity, and during the weekend itself, we have used "GB1OTA" (IOTA) and "GB301OTA" (30 years of IOTA) so why not "GB321OTA", or even "GB32IOTA", for this year? The omission of a digit representing I for Islands totally nullified the effect of the callsign. Thanks a bunch, RA.

As the HFC special callsign coordinator said: "*Perhaps one day sense will prevail*".

The "Welcome" feature in this issue lists a number of new members who joined at the HFC - most encouraging. I would personally like to welcome my old sparring partner (Hi!) Denzil, GW3CDP, back into the fold.

Lastly, if the DXer who approached Henry Lewis, G3GIQ, at the HF Convention, believing him to be G4DYO, would care to contact me I can recommend a most excellent optician!

CLUB NEWS AND VIEWS

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Neville Cheadle, G3NUG

Two major activities have been keeping me busy for the past quarter - the new 1997 RSGB IOTA Directory and Yearbook and the RSGB International HF and IOTA Convention at Windsor. As in previous years we had an excellent Convention. Some personal comments follow.

Convention - The Good Points

The contributions by our sponsors. Our thanks to Martin G4HKS of Martin Lynch and Son and to Barry G4RKO of Yaesu UK Ltd for your contribution and for your enthusiastic support. Without sponsorship we could not run the Convention in its present form. Thanks also to Barry for donating the main raffle prize, the Yaesu FT-990, and for providing the FT-1000MP for the demonstration station. And thanks to Peter G3ZRS of Linear Amp UK for providing a linear for the station.

The real highlight for me was the raffle in which we raised over £1,300 for the RSGB DXpedition Fund. There was a good range of prizes - and what a wonderful gesture by Etienne HB9DX who won the main prize and immediately presented it to the IOTA Committee. Many, many thanks Etienne - your generosity will be long remembered and we will make sure that the rig is well used.

The DX Dinner on the Friday evening was another highlight for me again, excellently chaired by Bob G3PJT who organised yet another great game. Short speeches, good fun, excellent food and company. Well done Bob!

I had the pleasure (or challenge!) of chairing the IOTA Buffet on the Saturday evening

and I hope everyone enjoyed it. The food was again excellent. Brendan, G0UCT did a super job with the auction of Yaesu accessories - thanks for your help Brendan. Roger G3KMA organised the IOTA quiz - my goodness, what a challenge that was! Tom WT2O was the winner - congratulations to Tom and my thanks to Roger. We also gave some further prizes. The first was to the person who had activated most IOTA island groups - this went to Steve, G4JVG, with 25 groups. Runner up was Taizo, GW0RTA, with 24 groups. Congratulations to Steve and Taizo for winning and for activating so many islands. The final prize was for the person activating the most all-time new IOTA groups. These are a real challenge of course and the winner was again Tom WT2O who had activated 9, yes 9, different IOTA groups for the first time - a very remarkable achievement!

The Beaumont certainly did us proud this year with excellent food but also with very good support behind the scenes. There are inevitably hiccups that have to be sorted out quickly, such as videos getting stuck in the machines and the Beaumont staff were really responsive this year.

DXCC card checking again proved very popular with over 80 applications being checked - the majority being from new applicants. Bill Kennamer, K5FUV, DXCC Manager did a great job, not only processing a large number of cards but also giving excellent presentations on DXCC and on Myanmar. Thank you Bill.

I felt the two IOTA presentations went well. Roger G3KMA opened with a report on the past year and I followed setting out our vision for the future. CDXC member Peter G4EJP, RSGB President, introduced us and sat through the whole morning of presentations and questions and answers. We had

around 100 attendees at each session. Thanks for your support Peter. There was much discussion about QSL defaulters. Yes, we do now have to take some firm action with these people.

Another highlight for me was the significantly higher number of G0s than in previous years. We've been trying to attract the newer licensees to the Convention for a number of years - at last we may be succeeding.

Convention - Must Do Better Next Time:

Avoid clashes with other events. There was no other weekend available at the Beaumont this year so we had a clash with the FOC weekend and also with the IARU meeting in Tel Aviv. Next year we should be able to avoid these clashes.

The programme needs to be finalised earlier and we should not have "TBA" slots in the final published programme. It is possible to finalise the programme well in advance, it's been done before! We were able to fill all the slots on the day and at one stage had four lectures running concurrently. These included an excellent video presentation of the Narechi Is AS-109 DXpedition by Nick UA9KM and his team. We ran this in the bar, it was very well attended and received - well done Nick. My personal view is that we need more lectures on technical subjects and fewer DXpedition stories. Future topics should include computers, antennas and propagation in my view.

The day visitors were similar to last year and the residential packages slightly up but at just under 100 were somewhat disappointing. There were not so many overseas visitors as in previous years - this was somewhat surprising as this was the main IOTA Convention of 1996.

It was also a pity that we could not get the special event call for use at our homes prior to the Convention. Apparently the rules have

changed. Last year we got a lot of useful pre-publicity from the M1OOG call. The special event station at the Beaumont was not well organised, but that's another story. We must do much better next year.

All feedback is of course very welcome and no doubt next year's organising committee will soon be looking for volunteers and lecturers. If you can help please contact Colin G3PSM as Chairman of the RSGB HF Committee. I've advised Colin that after five years of substantial involvement in the Convention organisation, I am now going into retirement. So, let's have some new ideas and fresh faces on the Committee!

1997 RSGB IOTA Directory & Yearbook

This new publication was launched at the Convention. Edited by Roger G3KMA, RSGB IOTA Manager, it seems to have been very well received indeed. Roger has done a great job. It has been beautifully published and printed under the auspices of the RSGB and is an absolute must for all island hunters and activators. Some of the particular highlights for me are:

The new rules on the validation of IOTA operations and the VK2BRT Broughton Is. (OC-212) and other case histories.

The most wanted island lists - it's interesting to see the many IOTA island groups that are still wanted by very large numbers of the IOTA gang. It takes several hundred contacts to significantly move the percentages needing an island group. This is not only because of the relatively few players (probably less than 10%) who claim awards but also because of the very large numbers who start chasing islands every month. Have a look too, at the listings of New Ones and Rare Ones 1995/96. How many of these did you work? This publication should become the "bible" of the island hunter as, in addition to masses of information about IOTA, it also contains details of 10 other major island programmes. All of these complement the

IOTA Programme.

There are many other interesting articles including: "Planning a DXpedition" by Martin G3ZAY, "The Barren Islands" by John NL7TB and "Malta 9H0A" by Don G3OZF. The RSGB press release enclosed with this issue gives some further details. This is an important venture for the IOTA Committee as a royalty on the sale of each Directory/Yearbook is paid by the RSGB into the IOTA Development Fund. These monies are used to fund projects such as the development of our computer systems and contributions to IOTA DXpeditions.

There will be a prize for the first CDXC member to spot the deliberate mistake in the Directory/Yearbook. We'd appreciate your support by buying this publication -- and please tell your friends about it. That's all until January. Have a great Christmas!

THE NEW VICE-CHAIRMAN

Steve Telenius-Lowe, G4JVG



I was delighted to have been elected one of the Vice-Chairmen of CDXC and will do my best to support the club in whatever way I can. For those members who do not know me, here is a brief 'DX autobiography'.

I was a keen SWL (A6993) and DXer from the age of 13, first becoming licensed as G8FEO whilst doing my 'O' levels. My first HF callsign was EP2SL, in the days when Iran was not quite as rare as it is now (1978 - 79). In Tehran I met Roger, G3SXW, who was then EP2IA, and he introduced me to the ways of contesting, although not CW - despite Roger's best endeavours I have never liked Morse. Nevertheless, after a year running pile-ups from EP-land I couldn't face returning to the barren wastes of 2m, so I

took and passed the Morse test in 1980 and became G4JVG.

During much of the 1980s I lived in Sweden and operated as G4JVG/SM0. This period included a year's residency on Lidingo, EU-084, in the days before IOTA really took off (look's like I'm always in the rare spots too soon!) I took part in numerous contests from SM and OH0, often multi-op with some of Sweden's best DXers and contestants, such as SM5AQD, SM0DJZ and SJ0AJU. Whilst in Sweden I took part in my first major DXpedition, to Market Reef. I enjoyed it so much I returned a few years later with a team which included GM3YOR and G4EDG, making well over 20,000 QSOs, then the largest-ever number of QSOs in a single DXpedition from OJ0.

I returned from Sweden with a wife, Eva, who now - after knowing me for nearly 14 years - has finally taken the hint and has just applied for her Novice callsign (2E1F-- is in the mail; she hopes to upgrade to a 2E0 sometime).



Expeditions, often coinciding with CQ contests, took me to the Channel Islands (GJ6UW and GU6UW) and to Montserrat (VP2MW) during the '80s, and on one occasion which I will remember for the rest of my life, to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. After meeting Cress, VK9YC (now VK6YX), the son-in-law of John Clunies-Ross, the last feudal ruler of the islands, Eva and I were able to spend two weeks staying with the Clunies-Ross family in their mid-ocean mansion, Oceania House. It was an idyllic time, and operating as AX9YG and VK9YG

was great fun too, which netted me a CQ plaque as top single-op DXpedition in CQ World Wide SSB 1988.

In 1991 I took up a three-year contract in Papua New Guinea and was active as P29DX (and P20A in certain contests), making just short of 40,000 QSOs altogether. In 1992 I was able to set a new CQ WPX contest record (Oceania 28MHz), and helped to set another (Oceania Multi-Single) as P20X the year after. Both these records still stand.

Half-way through the contract we travelled back to the UK on leave and returned via the 'long path', including short operations as 3D2SL, A35VG, 5W1SL and ZK2XG. Another period of leave enabled me to fulfil a long-time ambition: a major Pacific DXpedition. This was the VK9MM operation from Mellish Reef in September 1993, which made nearly 45,000 QSOs in nine days, and was another experience of a lifetime.

A few months after returning to the UK, gainful employment was again the order of the day and I have ended up as News Editor on RadCom at the RSGB in Potters Bar. Eva also works full-time at RSGB as an Administrator and one of her many duties is that of RSGB HQ IOTA Co-ordinator, including a position on the newly-formed IOTA Committee. Whilst she doesn't (yet!?) have a full callsign, like many CDXC wives she has, over the years, learned more about amateur radio and DXing than many fully-licensed amateurs ever will, and she is very supportive of this strange, time-consuming, hobby of ours. Fortunately, she loves travelling as much as I do.

We have now settled in Stevenage, and the globe-trotting days are over, for the time being at least. However, the thrill of working the pile-up is in my bones and I am always looking at the possibility of putting on another DXpedition, either of the 'single-op 100W to a vertical' type, or of the 'major

multi-op 40,000 QSO type. Watch this space....

JOTTINGS of the SECRETARY

Dave Mann G0HXN

By the time you read this missive the Convention would have been here and gone. I am sorry that I could not get round to attending this year. I had hoped to get down to Windsor on Sunday but, after arriving home from GW late on Saturday, I awoke with a stinking cold on Sunday morning, certainly not feeling like meeting and greeting. I hope all went well for those who attended, and the Convention lived up to its high standard which has been set over the last few years.

I have been missing out on radio for the last few months as work is taking up lots of time and as is usual in the NHS when certain key personnel leave they are not replaced but the work still needs to be done, so radio has had to take a step backwards. Hopefully things will improve a little over the winter months and I can get some air time in.

Whilst in Wales this last week Jenny and I had the pleasure of meeting John GW3JXN and his wife in their lovely 650 ft ASL QTH just north of Cardigan. John's other interest is radio controlled model aircraft; I never realised how large these "toys" were. But after having seen them my goodness what beautiful craftsmanship and high tech works of art they really are. I will certainly look on model aircraft flying in a different light from now on.

From what John was saying about being "lonely" down there in Wales on the radio front, this, I think, endorses my thoughts regarding a radio link up for CDXC. Please can I have your thoughts on this? I suppose it is all right for us who live relatively close to each other, on air contact is easy. But for those in far flung parts a friendly chat can go along way. Even looking at the tenuous link that John has with the Cluster it shows the

real commitment both in time and money that some have towards the hobby and for the enjoyment of others. John was telling me some of the problems that he has experienced in the following of his chosen hobby. I shall not embarrass him or break a confidence by repeating them, but I will say that a lot of people forget that Amateur Radio is a hobby.

On to more enjoyable matters I was very pleased to receive another letter from Denise our M0 in Cumbria. Well done Denise, this is what it is all about. Denise started on the HF Bands on May 22nd worked her 100th country on 6th July and has now racked up 150, and has just completed W.A.S. Having heard about her operating conditions this is really to be commended. I am sure that she will not mind me saying that she is not in the best of health and radio had helped take her mind off of her other problems. I think it is the reverse of the usual ham household, Denise's husband (XYM !!) is a real radio widower and must also be complemented. Her letter to me is published elsewhere in the Newsletter a shining example of what CDXC and Amateur Radio is all about.

POSTBAG

From Peter Halls, G4CRY:

I was out at the local car boot sale this morning hoping to find a big carbon fibre roach pole for use as an antenna. I didn't have any success but when I got home, my first CDXC Newsletter was waiting for me. First reaction - I am very pleased, it seems informative and interesting with lots of DX 'stuff'.

Comments on the DXCC 2000 business: I am one of that rare breed - an RTTY DXer. I have been back on the air now for about eighteen months after a 20 year layoff. I got into RTTY straight away. I use that mode almost exclusively although, of late, I have been getting into CW like never before and am pleased to see my speed improving

steadily - I can sometimes read 30wpm now if the sending is good. There is a socket on the front of the tcvr marked 'MIC' but I have not found a use for it yet! In spite of this concentration on RTTY, I have still not managed to work 100 countries yet. I'm close though - the score is 98 as I write or maybe with 5H3LM the other day it is now 99.

The number of cards returned is just under 70 at the moment. I hope, therefore, that DXCC will not be made 'current' because folks like me will never get RTTY HR. I note that RTTY is often given low priority or disregarded altogether. For example, the RSGB does not mention the BARTG annual contest or any other RTTY contest for that matter. Do not make the mistake of thinking that RTTY is dead. There are quite a few RTTY contests during the year and they occur about once a month. I have entered two now and managed to be the top UK score in the single/single 20m section. I really enjoyed it.

Many of the stations I work in the world are using a big beam. It would be nice to see some sort of ranking based on antenna size and o/p power. I use a GAP Titan vertical and an Explorer 1000 amplifier. It will run 400 watts all day during a contest without any trouble!

OK, that's it for now. I enjoy writing a lot and am retired so have lots of time to play. I could write a bit about RTTY DXing if you like but a few tips would be useful. I expect there are many CDXC members who know a lot more about DXing than me.

(Ed: Would greatly appreciate anything you care to submit on RTTY matters, Peter).

From John Clayton, G4PDQ:

I am surprised that you weren't aware of the fact that USB and LSB are transmitted from different parts of the antenna (CDXC Newsletter 103, Sept 1996, page 24).

I think it is also true that few people get the full potential out of their rigs. I heard possibly the same expert on 27MHz years ago when I was an SWL, saying that he had just got himself a new rig and that it had 120 channels - 40 Upper side-band, 40 Lower side-band, but he couldn't find the setting for the middle side band for the other 40 channels. Perhaps someone should have told him that it was obvious - it is the position marked "CW" - centre wave!

From Neil Smith, G4DBN:

Tony I0JX (CDXC Newsletter 103, page 21) was amazed by the PacketCluster user who asked how to talk to the stations being spotted and if the contacts count for DXCC. As a cluster SYSOP I get a dozen or so newly licensed hams connecting to GB7YDX each week, and an astoundingly large number of them ask the same question (although rarely do they mention DXCC, not having ever heard of it). I must have tried to explain what "DX" means to over a hundred ops in the last year or two.

I am coming to the conclusion that the educational process by which the licence is gained in the UK must have some very serious shortcomings when that number of hams in the catchment area of this cluster node seem to have no concept of what DXing, as understood by the average CDXC member, is actually about.

The problem is not confined to new VHF-only ops either, quite a few G0 and M0 stations, along with some who were licensed in the pre-packet days, have also been most upset to find that they have to go to all the hassle of getting a radio, antenna and plug it all together to be able to contact all those funny-looking callsigns that they get on their computer screens.

It is possible that PacketCluster SYSOPS and users are to blame by not marketing the service we provide in such a way that new ops will see the information, but short of ar-

ranging a leaflet campaign, it is not easy to see how we can do a more effective job without an extensive leaflet campaign or floods of articles in the radio press.

If we are producing a large percentage of new hams who have no concept of DXing as a central part of the hobby, then should we be surprised that most of them spend their time on packet and repeaters rather than exploring what we oldies think of as "Real Radio"? Some of the folks teaching RAE courses must be doing a great job, as quite a large minority of the new licensees do know something about the weak-signal modes on VHF and DXing on HF. Let us imagine an RAE course leader in a large town, with a well-attended RAE course, who has the wrong idea about what the Cluster is about, or what DXing is. Should we be at all surprised to find large numbers of his students with the same lack of knowledge or worse, a totally inaccurate picture of one of the core activities of the hobby?

I think it is up to us to find out who the course leaders are and to make sure they have an accurate and informed picture of what DXing is about and what motivates DXers to pursue the abstract goals we set ourselves. In addition, perhaps we Cluster SYSOPS need to target those same opinion-formers and make certain that they are not perpetuating myths and falsehoods about what the cluster is for and how best to use it in pursuit of our collective obsession.

From Denise Morris, M0ADG:

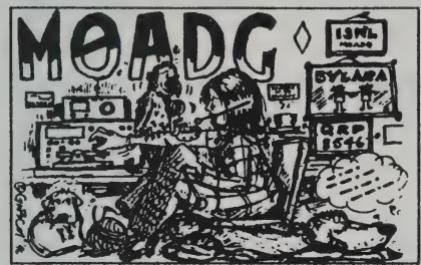
Thank you for your kind comments about me in the Newsletter. I wish I could thank all those amateurs who have been so generous with their help and advice. I have met only kindness on the air.

I started on the HF bands on 22 May and managed to work my one hundredth country on 6 July. To date I have worked 1488 and only need to work Delaware to have worked all States. I am really enjoying the hobby

and hope to take full advantage of the coming upswing in the sunspot cycle. I use an ICOM 706 with a Cobweb at 40 ft (there is no room for a beam) and, on the lower bands, 40 metres of wire in the shape of a quad loop squeezed into my back yard.

I now have a manager - KF0UI - as I am not in the best of health at the moment and he is a great help to me.

Lastly, I really enjoy the Newsletter and look forward to gleaning any tips from the more experienced DXers. Please pass my thanks and appreciation to all concerned.



CONGRATULATIONS!

1. It's always a great pleasure to hear of another G on the DXCC Honor Roll. Bill Hall, G8JM, just achieved it with a score of 365/324. Bill writes: "I've been trying to get on the Honor Roll since the 60's when my good friend G3YF, who was one of the earliest on Honor Roll (now a Silent Key) persuaded me to start working for it." With an all-time total of 365 Bill must have been very close on several occasions. Many congratulations on a tremendous achievement, Bill, and good luck in working the last few.

2. At the recent HF Convention, CDXC plaques for 1995 CQ WW UK high scoring contestants were awarded as follows:

High power SSB	GI0KOW
High power CW	GI0KOW
Low power SSB	G4KIV
Low power CW	G3SWH

PW SPOTLIGHT TROPHY

Alan Jubb, G3PMR

In July, *Practical Wireless* announced the *Spotlight Trophy* for the best UK radio club newsletter. As this was the point at which I had just finished editing my last Newsletter for CDXC, I decided that I'd have a last fling and submit an entry. I sent in copies of the March 1996 (Issue 100) and July 1996 (Issue 102) Newsletters.

Judges were David Barlow, G3PLE (who came up with the idea), Rob Mannion, G3XFD, Editor of PW, Zoë Crabb (PW editorial staff), David Wilkins G5HY (Kenwood UK, and CDXC member), and Jim Bacon, G3YLA, well known Anglia TV weather man.

The winner will hold a trophy, a magnificent silver cup, donated by Kenwood UK, for a year, which will be presented at the Leicester show each year. Marks are awarded for various categories (I don't think I've actually seen a list of the categories), and a perfect score is 50 points. Results for 1996 are as follows:

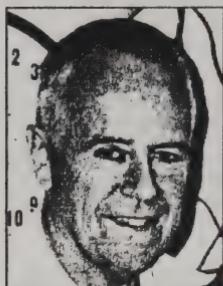
Pos	Club	Pts
1	Hoddesdon RC	48
2=	Cockenzie & Pt Seton ARC	40
2=	Silverthorne RC	40
4=	CDXC	39
4=	Southgate ARC	39
6=	North Ferriby United ARS	38
6=	Yeovil ARC	38
7	Cornish RAC	34
8	Bristol ARC	32
9	Brighton & District ARS	26

Congratulations to Hoddesden, who were clear leaders. Hopefully if Bren decides to enter next year, we will do better!

Ed: I might give it a whirl...!! Hi!

BANGKOK - I'M HERE!

By Phil Weaver, HS0/G4JMB



My visit to Hong Kong in late June, was a great success and I was able to accomplish all the outstanding things I wanted to do, such as getting together the remainder of my amateur radio equipment which had been in store since last year. The plan was to split my station in two with the FT1000 going to Bangkok and the ICOM 765 being sent to Kota Kinabalu where I am having an apartment built. The original idea had been to establish a home there as well in case I was to have difficulty with the Immigration situation in Thailand but I have been fortunate enough to obtain an annual retiree visa which will enable me to go and come in Thailand as I please with an annual renewal. This has meant that the idea of a second home can be put aside and instead I intend to rent out the apartment in Kota Kinabalu. It is a lovely country and I can see myself visiting there on a fairly regular basis.

Now that I had an import license into Thailand for my FT1000 I returned there on 30 June and after landing, surrendered my FT1000 to the Customs officers. They did not seem to worried about other items I also brought in such as a brand new rotator and a mattress for my sun bed. With all this baggage on departure from Hong Kong, I was some what over weight and in the end had to pay for 30 kilos excess, £90.

The next day, accompanied by Thida, my friend who had helped me obtain the import license from the Thai PTD, we went to the Customs office to collect the radio and pay what ever the landed duty might be. The whole performance, for that is what it was,

took two hours and twenty minutes. During this time the documentation associated with the import of the transceiver was passed from office to office and must have had at least twenty signatures on it by the time I was finally requested to pay £226 vat and duty. Once we had the radio from Customs it immediately had to be taken to the Post and Telegraph Department (PTD) for their engineers to check that it was the radio I had declared I was importing and not able to transmit outside the amateur band and also not to exceed two hundred watts as that is the current legal maximum power limit that any amateur radio is permitted in Thailand. In fact I was told later than when checked it transmitted at 210 watts, and had to be adjusted!

Whilst all this was going on I put in my formal application for a station license with the PTD. The application had to include a statement from my landlord that he gives permission for me to have a amateur radio station on his property, he also had to submit his registration documentation that he was the owner of the property from which I was going to transmit, and identity card, along with a map showing its location. This application was put in on the 25 July, and I was told it might take any where from one to three months to get the station license. I found out that the transmitter had been approved on the 7th August and much to my surprise and delight I received my transmitter back, and station license on the 23 August.

Further, whilst all this was going on I was also negotiating with the Immigration Department for my annual retiree visa and I shall upon return, be getting my passport chopped with that on the 8th October when I return to Thailand.

The next thing I shall be organising is for a tower to be erected on the roof of my apartment building. The Landlord has agreed to this but it is proving a little difficult to find

a tower builder who does not have other work such that he can do the job, two companies I have already been talking with had said that they were unable to do any thing for me, but I have hope that by the time you read this I shall have a tower up and be back on the air. I am currently, at time of writing, negotiating for a nine meter tower, to be installed on the roof of the ten story apartment building, which at first quotation is going to cost £395 installed, but by the time we have put in a rotator plate and the bearing I am sure it will come to more.

In parallel with all of the above, all my worldly possessions were making the voyage from Hong Kong. Upon arrival in Bangkok I was told by the Shippers that the customs had said that all my goods would be subject to duty unless I had an annual visa in my passport, a typical catch 22 situation when two different government departments work in their own way. You cannot get an annual visa into your passport until you have landed with a 90 day non immigrant visa, which means that in theory cannot get my personal effects landed without payment of duty. I decided that it would be ridiculous to leave every thing in a customs warehouse, paying storage, until the visa was in my passport so I asked the shippers to check with customs what the duty would be. I was more than happy to pay the £210 demanded. Of course there was no receipt!!!

From the above you can see that it is not the easiest of things to get into Thailand and become a Radio Amateur, however I have persevered, and am happy to have done so. There are many more plus factors to make it all very well worth while. I shall look forward I hope, to many more years here and hopefully should any readers pass through then I hope that I might get to see you on your visit to Asia. Contrariwise, as far as East Malaysia was concerned, I was able, with no problem or restriction, other than to get a license for same, to import the ICOM

765, along with a dual band VHF radio. This equipment I am hoping to establish along with the lightning Bolt Quad at the home of 9M6SU, where I some times stay when I visit Sabah, and where I hope I will be able to operate from.

I still intend to travel a lot and after Christmas will be coming to England for a few weeks and then off to Australia for a couple of weeks before joining the QE2 for two month cruise back to England. Provided the same situation exists on the QE2 as last year I shall hopefully be operating as G4JMB/MM once again between 11 February and 11 April 1997.

Ex-VS6CT LUNCH CLUB

The last gathering to lunch with Phil Weaver, ex-VS6CT, took place in early September. It was good to see G3COJ, G3GIQ, G3KMA, G3LQP, G3OZF, G3ZSS, G4DYO, G0HXN, G0OPB and G0PHN together with four XYLs. Depending on his travel arrangements, the next Lunch Club meeting with Phil Weaver is scheduled for 13 January, 1997 at The Cricketers, Bagshot.

WELCOME!

The following DXers have recently joined CDXC. We hope that they will enjoy being members and that they will participate in CDXC activities:

G0CSF (100+)	Fred	Sevenoaks
G0OOF (203)	Reg	Stroud
G0PCF (126)	Bruce	Hassocks
G0SAH (200+)	Alan	Welwyn Garden City
G3JKB (150)	Dave	Binbrook
G3MXH	Terry	Stratford-Upon-Avon
G3PEM (175)	Carl	Chelmsford
G3XVR (291)	Dan	Farnham
G3YRP	Ian	Derbys
G3ZEM (300)	Bob	Whitwell on the Hill
G3ZJF (203)	Peter	St Albans
G4AHJ	Mikeh	Huddersfield
G10NWG (200)	Andrew	Armagh
GM0UHC (155)	Ian	West Lothian
GM3JOB (140)	Rodger	Irvine
GW3CDP	Denzil	Neath

(Countries worked scores in brackets)

Dave Mann, G0HXN, CDXC Secretary

PENALLT TROPHY

This beautiful silver cup was donated to CDXC by the Western DX Group in 1990, as a memorial to the late Allan Phillips, GW0BIC. It is named after the town of Penallt in Gwent, where Allan lived. He was greatly interested in DX working on the lower frequency bands and, under the terms of the donation, CDXC members may compete for the cup on an annual basis by working as many countries as possible during a specified period on those bands (7, 3.5 and 1.8MHz). Steve, GW4BLE has won the cup three times, and is to be congratulated on his efforts.

- 1 The competition is open to all paid-up members of The Chiltern DX Club.
- 2 The object is to contact as many countries as possible on the 1.8, 3.5, and 7MHz bands during a seven day period in the months of December and January. The same stations or countries may be contacted on each of the three bands irrespective of mode. Only one contact per band per station/country is permitted
- 3 The score is the sum of the countries worked on the three bands during the seven day period. Proof of contact may be required
4. There are no restrictions as to operating times, dates or modes and the entrant may choose any seven day period within the two specified months. For the purposes of this competition, a seven day period is from 0000z Saturday to 2359z Friday.
5. The entrant will be required to submit a log showing date and time of each contact, and band, mode, and name of each country worked. A summary sheet should also be submitted which should list the countries worked on each of the three bands. If preferred, the entrant may submit photocopies of the relevant parts of the station log, with those countries claimed for the competition entry clearly marked. The summary sheet should also be submitted
6. Logs and summary sheets should be sent to Bill Moorwood, G3CAQ, 4 Station Road, Codshall, Wolverhampton WV8 1DA. Entries must be received by 1 April each year.
7. The Penallt Trophy will be presented at the CDXC Annual Dinner, or at the RSGB HF Convention. The winner will hold the trophy for a period of one year. It will be the responsibility of the winner to arrange insurance cover on the trophy during the period that it is held, and to return the trophy to the CDXC Awards Manager prior to the end of the twelve months.

HEARD ISLAND DXPEDITION 1997

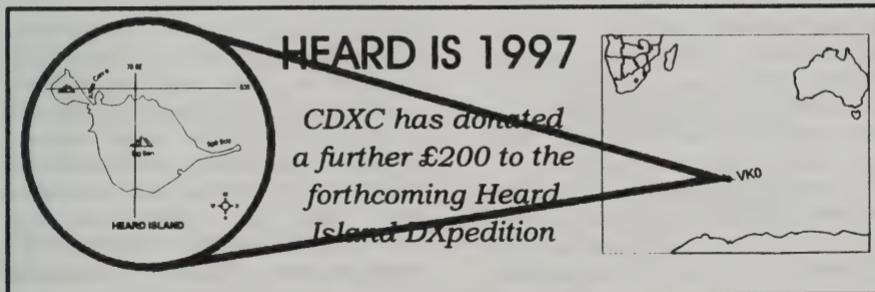
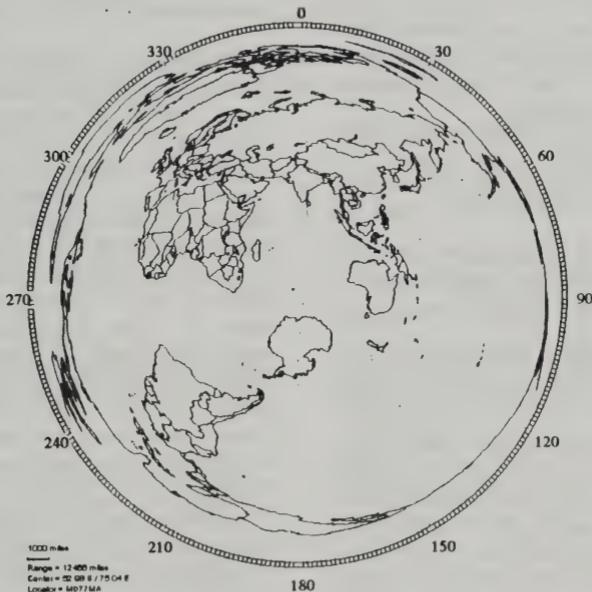
LATEST LIST OF TEAM MEMBERS

EA8AFJ Michel Sabatino
HB9AHL Willy Rusch
JH4RHF Junicho Tanaka
KA6W Ted Algren
KØIR Ralph Fedor
K4UEE Bob Allphin
K9AJ Mike McGirr

KK6EK Bob Schmieder
N6EK Bob Fabry
N6MZ Michael Mraz
NP4IW Carlos Nascimento
OE9AMJ Arno Metzler
ON6TT Peter Casier
PA3DUU Arie Nugteren

RA3AUU Igor Booklan
VK2TQM David Muller
W6OTC Glenn Vinson
W8FMG Wes Lamboley
WAØPUJ Glenn Johnson
WA3YVN Al Hernandez
9V1YC James Brooks

HEARD ISLAND GREAT CIRCLE CHART



DXCC REPORT

DXCC AWARDS

This CDXC Newsletter feature lists all UK award recipients appearing in QST. This list includes callsigns, with their DXCC credits, from the October edition of QST, ® ARRL. (QST was held up in the post this month so grateful thanks to Jeff, G4SOF, who passed this info on 80m soon after he received his copy!).

NEW MEMBERS

Mixed	GM0BWR	105
Phone	Nil	
CW	Nil	

ENDORSEMENTS

Mixed	GM3CIX	357
Phone	G4PTJ	328
CW	GM3CIX	346

There were no other updates involving UK/NI/CI stations this time. Out of interest - for the 160m enthusiasts - ON4UN has updated his 160m DXCC and now has 265 credited! A fine effort by anyone's standards.

HONOR ROLL AT LAST

John Shew, N4QQ

(Ed: This article was written back in August, but the sentiments are the same for anyone achieving this major DXing goal).

For what it's worth, I finally made Honor Roll - after 30 yrs of sporadic efforts with minimal antennas and, for the last five years, high suburban noise. I worked VK0WH in the final list on 20 meters just as he was peaking to 44. I listened unsuccessfully for the first hour as other guys (mostly west coast) worked him on 20 but with local S7 line noise I didn't hear Warren at all. Finally, at about 0620Z, I began to hear Warren through the crud so threw my call in the last 20m list-taking pileup and was third from the bottom. 15 minutes later it was my turn and I actually heard my report - 54 - and VK0WH heard the report I gave - 44 - which was quite honest, no repeats. I've been tracking and getting up early for VK0WH for the last 6 months. (I figure I've lost about 200 hours of sleep total) with no luck. Thank God for VK9NS and the other net controllers for a really efficient and hon-

est effort.

A second FWIW (for what its worth) came two hours later on 40 meters with reverse conditions. I heard VK0WH real well at the beginning of his 40 meter list operation - honest S8 - but in my elation over just working him on 20 for Honor Roll and, I hope, in consideration for those who didn't make it on 20, I waited to the end of the third or fourth list before I started throwing my call at the list taker. Again, I was third from the end of the list. By the time VK0WH got to my call propagation had fallen, but I got a 4 by 2 for number 278 on 40 with modest wire antennas.

I'm not fond of list operations, but every so often it's the only way for modest stations (either skill or RF wise) to successfully QSO. Last night was one of those wonderful occasions. Sure it would have been easier if ZL1AMO were the resident operator, could have worked him on CW on 6 bands easily over a DXpedition week, but it wasn't Ron. Rather, it was a well meaning guy with a very limited RF set-up (freq wise - pre-programmed commercial equipment)

with very poor propagation and lacking the skills acquired over 30 yrs of contesting, but a guy who, for some reason, found the guts to deal with 100 plus deep pile ups with the able assistance of more experienced DXers like Jim Smith.

The list operation last night on 20 and 40 was an example of exceptional discipline and efficiency - a real group effort that succeeded for many reasons and, all things considered, every bit as impressive as some of the more polished DXpeditions I've successfully negotiated over the last several years. Of course, it being my last pile up in a life-time quest for Honor Roll sure colours my perceptions.

A third FWIW - at least 4 other very experienced DXers on my local DX Cluster were able to work VK0WH for an all-time new one last night...I'll bet another 100 to 150 nation-wide got through for a new one over the 3 hours I was on freq. Hope that others were as thrilled when they finally made Honor Roll as I was last night.

9H3UP

K0SR received the following explanation from the DXCC desk for rejection of his 9H3UP QSL:

"9H3UP, 'Roy Rogers', is actually Romeo Stepanenko. He does have a house in Malta, and resides there part time. However, there is no guarantee that he was there when worked him, as he has been known to use any call from anywhere.

Romeo Stepanenko was disqualified from DXCC earlier this year. This includes not only his operations from anywhere, but also his ability to serve as a QSL manager.

This has come to our attention only recently, and we will be correcting records."

This letter was signed by Bill Kennamer, K5FUV.

Wayne, WB6EQX, reports:

A friend called me this morning, stating that he had just talked to Bill Moore at the DXCC. Mr. Moore was reported as saying the following:

"All contacts made with EM1KA prior to August 23, 1996 will be accredited. All contacts after Aug 23, 1996 will not be."

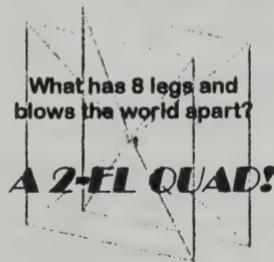
I called, but could find no one who could tell me what criteria was used in determining this Aug 23, 1996 date for the cut off. To my knowledge, 9H3UP was the same person prior and after August 23, 1996. This information truly beats the heck out of me. I need this country confirmed on several bands.

Later Stu Greene, WA2MOE wrote:

According to Bill Kennamer K5FUV, the situation is as follows:

QSO's with EM1KA definitely will count for DXCC. QSO's before August 23, 1996 confirmed by 9H3UP will be credited. QSO's after August 23, 1996 confirmed by 9H3UP will NOT be credited. Try QSLing JA2JPA for post 8/23/96 QSO's and hope.

(Ed: JA2JPA acts as QSL Manager for EM1KA for JA contacts. It has been confirmed that cards from this manager will be OK for DXCC and stations outside Japan may like to try this route. JA2JPA has all the EM1KA logs, not just those containing JA QSOs.)



HONOR ROLL CHASER TABLE

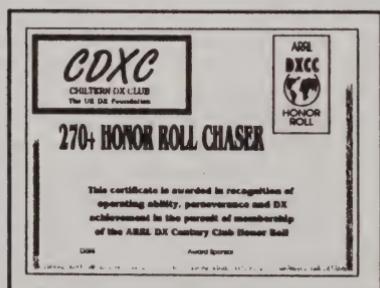
Rules for entry to the Honor Roll Chaser's table were published in the September Newsletter. All numbers in the table are for confirmed DXCC countries and positions in the table are based on current mixed score (confirmed). The table will be published again in the February Newsletter. Please note that those who last updated in November 1995 who wish to remain in the table must submit an update. "Nil" updates are acceptable.

There are 329 current DXCC countries. The qualifying number for Honor Roll is 320.

CALL	UPDATED	CW *		SSB		MIXED	
		Current	Total	Current	Total	Current	Total
G3NOF	Jul-96			328	364	328	364
G4DYO	Jul 96	101	104	328	341	328	341
G3XTT	Jul-96	324	331	324	332	327	335
G8LX	Jul-96	301		318		321	356
GM4UZY	Mar-96			319	324	319	324
G4YRR	Nov-95	222	222	318	323	318	323
G0WAZ	Jul-96	87	87	307	314	317	321
G3RZP	Jul-96					317	322
G4CJY	Mar-96					317	321
G4OBK	Nov-95	297	301	294	298	317	321
G4NXG/M	Oct-96			316	321	318	321
G3LHJ	Sep-96	290	296			313	340
G3NKC	Jul-96	284	288	271	275	312	316
G0LRJ	Jul-96			311	315	311	315
GM4XLU	Jul-96			310	316	310	316
G0KIK	Jul-96			309	313	309	313
G4AZN	Mar-96	269	275	298	308	309	318
G4AFJ	Sep-96					308	324
G3NOH	Sep-96	303	307			303	307
G4AHJ	Sep-96		15			298	304
GW3JXN	Jul-96	236	239	232	237	297	300
G3SWH	Nov-95	295	299			295	299
G3XMZ	Nov-95					291	
G3PMR	Oct-96	274	278	239	243	287	291
G3KWK	Jul-96					286	302
G3DPX	Jul-96	273				273	
G0MSM	Sep-96	47	96	257	281	259	264
GMOEGI	Mar-96			257	261	257	261

Note 1. CW contacts dated prior to January 1st 1975 count only for mixed mode credit.

Note 2. Shaded callsigns are those currently listed on the DXCC Honor Roll.



The 270+ Honor Roll Chaser certificate sponsored by G4DYO. The A4-sized certificate, which is printed multi-coloured on good quality paper, is available to CDXC members, both at home and abroad, who are not yet on Honor Roll and who have 270 or more confirmed countries on the DXCC Current Countries List.

ERRATA: See Rules on page 29 of Newsletter 103. The certificate is currently available ONLY to CDXC members.

GENERAL TOPICS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY #1

Martti Laine, world-renowned DXer and DXpeditioner, hits his half century on 21 November. He is having his birthday bash at Nauru in the Pacific with a few honoured guests. Watch the usual DX frequencies later this month..

Martti has completed his TOD in the Far East and he and his family are returning to their home in Finland.

Ed: I'm sure all CDXC members will wish to join in wishing Martti every health and happiness on his birthday, and many more of them to come.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY #2

Newsletter advertiser Martin Lynch celebrated his fortieth birthday on 2 November with a major bash at the ham store in Ealing.

Congratulations Martin!

TECHNICAL TIP

Local cellular dudes found out the hard way that you don't take Phillystran all the way to the ground. Range fire due to a small lightning storm burned off guys and a 200' tower is now scrap. 73 de Gary K7FR

KH6IJ QRV AGAIN

Frances A McKenney, daughter of the world famous DXer and contester Katashi Nose, KH6IJ, has been issued with her late father's callsign under the vanity callsign programme. Frances, 43, had a Novice licence many years ago but allowed it to lapse. Brad Wyatt, K6WR, encouraged her to get her ticket again and she was issued with the call WH6CUJ. The new KH6IJ lives in Honolulu. (Trx September QST, ® ARRL)

Ed: I worked the original KH6IJ on many

occasions and the HF bands have never been the same during openings over the pole since his passing. I don't believe I ever heard him ragchew, just contest-style Qs - my kind of operator! Back in the Golden Days someone said: "If you want to know anything about DXing ask Katashi, Katashi knows!" His daughter will sure have to get her skates on to work as many contacts as Nose.

EAT YOUR HEART OUT

A series with this title ran for many years in DX News Sheet, much to the amusement of UK readers and the puzzlement of those overseas! How about we run a similar series in this Newsletter? To start the ball rolling here is EYHO #1, published in DXNS of 21 January, 1986 (so it's a little out of date):

Bill Gosney, KE7C, has the following in his back-yard: Tower #1 6-el 10m KLM, 5-el 20m KLM, 3-el 40m KLM, 80m Bobtail Curtain, 160m Inverted Vee - and this tower is also shunt-fed and remotely tuned for 160m. Tower #2 6-el 10m KLM, 6-el 15m KLM, 5-el 20m KLM, 12m sloper, 17m sloper, 40m Inverted Vee, 80m sloper. Tower #3 28-el 2m beam, 10m home-brew vertical, 5-el 15m Wilson beam, 4-el 20m Wilson beam - and this tower is shunt-fed and remotely tuned for 80m. Bob fires this lot up with a Yaesu set up into 3 linears - an Amp Supply LK-500ZB, home-brew 2x4-400 and home-brew 4-1000a. Not content with this, he hopes to install a larger system!

Get the message? Contributions please...

C31RC IS A SLIM



C31US (President of URA - Unio de Radioaficionats Andorrans) reports that this station is a pirate. Do not QSL.

DXPEDITION DEFINED?

Ron Hill, K6OZL wrote on the DX Reflector:

Maybe it's time we give DXpeditions (or operations) a classification:

DXpedition: Full-blown 24 hours-a-day, all band gung-ho effort.

Operation: (I'm gonna pack a ham rig in my suitcase and operate when I feel like it.. maybe.)

OH2BH Demo: (I'm gonna go to the rarest one of all and give a "demo" only.)

KK6EK DXpedition: (The strangest thing happened on our way to the charter vessel...)

Gary Shapiro, NI6T, Editor of *The DXer* (NCDXC newsletter) responded:

Even all-band gung-ho operators have to sleep and to deal with times when there is NO prop anywhere, especially at the bottom of a cycle, so perhaps your DXpedition definition ought to be modified just a bit.

I'm not going to touch the last two with a 10m dipole!

Ron, you need some sunspots, badly.

NEW ICOM RIG..

ICOM IC756 SPECIFICATIONS General Receive frequency coverage 30 kHz - 60MHz. Specifications guaranteed only on amateur bands. Transmit frequency coverage: Amateur Band. Modes: SSB, CW, AM, FM, RTTY. Memory channels: 101 with memo. Antenna impedance: 50 ohms nominal. Frequency stability: Less than +/- 200Hz from 1 min. to 60 min. after power on. After that, rate of stability change is less than +/-30Hz at +25°C. Power supply requirement: 13.8V DC s15%. Current drain at 13.8V, Transmit 20A; Receive ? Dimensions: Millimeters: 340(W) x 111(H) x 285(D). Projections not included. Weight: 9.3kg. Transmitter Output power: HF & 50MHz: 5 - 100W (AM 5 - 40W) Spurious

emissions: H F - better than -50 dB; 50MHz - better than -60dB. B. Carrier suppression better than 40 dB. Unwanted sideband suppression better than 55dB. Microphone impedance 600 ohms. Receiver SSB, CW, AM, RTTY, FM, Quad conversion superheterodyne. Sensitivity with pre-amp on SSB, CW (for 10 dB S/N) 1.8 - 29.9950 MHz -16dBu (pre-amp 1 on), .50 - 54 MHz -18dBu (pre-amp 2 on), AM (for 10 dB S/N/N) 0.5- 1.799999MHz +22dBu (pre-amp off), 1.8 - 29.9950 MHz +6dBu (pre-amp 1 on) FM (for 12 dB SINAD) 28.0 - 29.99 MHz -6dBu (pre-amp on) 50 - 54 MHz -10dBu (pre-amp 2 on), Audio output power More than 2.0W at 10% distortion with an 8 ohm load.

FEATURES, Multi-Function LCD Display; 4.9inch Display, Spectrum scope (+/-25KHz +/-50KHz +/-100KHz), A list of memory CH display with memo. A list of mode establishment. A list of mem-Key mem-message character. DSP; using DSP IF amp (15KHz), AFP super narrow CW filter (80Hz, 160Hz, 320Hz). Variable center FREQ (300-900Hz). Auto notch. Digital PSN. Twin PBT separate upper and lower. Dual watch in the same band. 4 CH CW message keyer (max 54 character each channel). Automatic antenna tuner (HF and 50MHz). Variable Noise Blanker, etc. PRICE in JAPAN. 258,000 yen, August 1996. (*Ed:* That's about £1,500 - wonder what it will cost over here?)

G PREFIXES

VE1AL asked for a guide to the new G calls. Roger Western, G3SXW, kindly provided the following round-up. (*Ed:* I realised I didn't know them either!):

England: G, GX, M, MX, 2E
Isle of Man: GD, GT, MD, MT, 2D
Northern Ireland: GI, GN, MI, MN, 2I
Jersey: GJ, GH, MJ, MH, 2J
Scotland: GM, GS, MM, MS, 2M
Guernsey: GU, GP, MU, MP, 2U
Wales: GW, GC, MW, MC, 2W

Explanation, taking England as the example. The vast majority of calls are G, being the full licence, home station. Clubs may add the X to the prefix by choice. Since April 1996 the M series started, as G calls have been exhausted. So M is equivalent to G (full licence, home) and MX is equivalent to GX (clubs). At present all M full calls have zero as the digit. The 2E calls are novices - they are to be heard in restricted segments of the HF bands with low power. VHF-only licences use different digits but the same prefixes.

Sorry - if you hear a GB call-sign you have no idea which country it is in. You need to find out for each individual call, though most are in England. I think that's daft as well !

You will also hear one-by-one calls in major contests. These will be in the G6 and M6 series, with regional indicators as appropriate (a total of 52 calls). The digit indicates the year so in 1997 it will change to seven.

TO LICENSING

Carl, WB4ZNH wrote, in early September:

"I spoke to the Director General of Telecommunications in Sana'a, Yemen yesterday. Amateur Radio is still NOT permitted there. Apparently the Italian who operated there this past summer did so without official permission".

(Txn 425 DX News)

BY DXERS.. FOR DXERS?

The following is an abstract from The "Considerate Operator's Frequency Guide" which appeared on page 104 of QST for January, 1996:

1.910 QRP SSB calling frequency

CDXC MEMBERS....

are ALWAYS 89+

GOLDEN DAYS

Remembering that the "Golden Days" are those which are long gone and never to return, here are a few notes about what was happening around ten years ago.

Clipperton and Kure Islands were about to be activated and there was talk of a permanent amateur station being set up on Mount Athos for the use of visiting SV hams.

Well-known Auckland taxi-driver Ron Wright, ZL1AMO continued his Pacific wanderings with a trip to Christmas Island signing VK9XI from the club station.

It was reported that the Australian Government would be commencing regular scientific trips to Heard Island. Jim Smith was said to be trying for an early place!

A non-scheduled boat reported to be carrying two hams to Marion Island ended in tears for the Deserving. One op had no licence and the other one was authorised for VHF only. As a result the large number of QSOs made - mainly under list conditions - were non-countable for DXCC.

Drew, GM3YOR, was about to embark on a sun-soaking trip to 4S7 while Martin, G3ZAY and Don, G3XTT were making final preparations for their IOTA trip to the Farne Islands (EU-109).

John Bright, G3TJW became the second UK DXer to achieve the full 5BWAZ. (Past CDXC President Bill Hawthorne, G3MCS was the first).

Lastly, the following appeared in DXNS for 3 September, 1986:

UK SOUTH-WEST DX GROUP- For those in doubt, DXing is alive and well and living in SW England, although this also includes those with a '10db callsign advantage' - the GWs. John Forward, G3HTA, is the 1986/87 winner of the RSGB 'ROTAB' trophy, for 'consistent DX work', a well deserved award. John Bright, G3TJW, apart from be-

ing only the second G to gain the full 5BWAZ, has also become the first recipient of the RSGB 5-Band Commonwealth Century Club Award in the Supreme Class. Hazel Timbrell G4YLO, who as noted in DXNS 1230 achieved success in the last ARRL 10m Contest, won the mid-winter YL/OM Contest. (Remember her OM Tim, G4STH, won the first RSGB Commonwealth CC Award). Steve, GW4BLE, was top GW in the ARRL 10m Contest, top UK in the CQ WW SSB, World 5th on 14mhz in the WPX and winner of the RSGB 21/28mhz Contest! Another Steve, G4EDG, won the RSGB 7mhz CW Contest and G4ELZ won the QRP Field Day Contest.

More recently we asked John Forward, G3HTA, who was a most active WDXG member, what had become of the group. John replied:

The Western DX Group was never a formal Group. There were no subscriptions or even a membership list. We were just a number of like minded DX chasers who kept in touch on 144.525 MHz. Remember when we used to actually talk to each other and call in DX spots? When we were visiting anywhere South of a line Birmingham to North of London you could find a DX friend on that channel and chat about DX. Happy days! There are still a few of us on 144.525 MHz in the West country - packet hasn't taken it over down here yet. G3TJW and I talk every morning at 0700 and during the day G3RUV will often call in. Also on there is G4YAQ, G2BJK, G4SOF, G0GKB, G3GNR and occasionally G0ABI..

The only vestiges of the WDXG left is the GB7WDX DX Cluster, now located at Western-Super-Mare and run by G7OPJ on behalf of the Western DX Cluster Group. I suppose the decline is because of the nature of our interest in amateur radio. We enthusiastically pursue DXCC and that becomes self destructive. When you get to the number one position on the Honor Roll, what else is there to do? Getting up in the night to in the hope of finding a new one isn't go-

ing to happen so expeditions are not so exciting and there's less to talk to others about. Look back over DXNS and see the DXers who were highly active just a few years ago - got to the top and gone! Lets face it, getting to the Honor Roll isn't too difficult. So far this year I have worked 212c - no effort. Last year it was over 270 including 5 band DXCC and over 200 on some bands.

However, for those of us who have spent their lifetime studying news sheets, watching propagation and challenging the pile-up's, there is a new and exciting pursuit that should last anyone's lifetime - IOTA. Today it's probably more exciting than DXCC because of the size, 1178 islands/island groups and only about 800 or so have ever been activated. Fellows are off on low cost IOTA expeditions to islands around the UK and having a really good time. There are 23 numbered groups around the UK alone, without going to Ireland or the islands of mainland Europe. So here we are again, back on 144.525 MHz calling in spots, exchanging news of expeditions, what has been worked, getting up in the night and floods of QSL's. Who knows, a few of those dormant DX'ers might eventually wake up and start having fun again!

SPECIAL HONG KONG CALLS

*By Brett Graham, VS96BG,
(President HARTS)*

Confirmation has been received by the Hongkong Amateur Radio Transmitting Society, from the Hongkong Government Office of the Telecommunications Authority, that amateurs here will be allowed to use several prefixes to commemorate the transfer of sovereignty over the territory from the United Kingdom to the People's Republic of China on 1 July 1997.

At the request of HARTS, Hongkong amateurs will be allowed to change the numeral in their callsign to "96" in 1996, "97" in 1997 & "98" in 1998. Amateurs began to

use these new prefixes on 10 September 1996, starting with a contact between VS96BG & VR96GO.

HARTS will announce later the details of a new award to be offered to amateurs for contacting stations using these special prefixes.

All Hongkong amateurs have held licenses with callsigns using the prefix VR2 for several years now, although those previously holding VS6 calls are allowed to continue to use the VS prefix before 1 July 1997. The VRA-VRZ block allocated by the ITU to the UK will be transferred to the PRC at that time & will be used by the Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the PRC after that date.

The only other use of that block by amateurs at present is in Pitcairn Island, where VR6 calls are still in use. At present, we do not know what prefix will be used there after 1 July 1997.

1ST GM ISLES WINNER?



No!, just Sid May, ET3SID and his XYL. Recall that Sid also operated as 9J2ED, VP2KH, VP2MKH, A4XGB, 5N0SID, ZB2HL and G4CTQ/ST2, etc.

ETO IN LZ!

LZ1JK is now making the Alpha 91B linear amplifiers for ETO. Previously they were built by Nick LZ1JY. A new building is being constructed for production of the 91B and 87A. LZ1JK is Deputy Prime Minister of Bulgaria.

(*Ed:* Rumours that John Major is opening a factory to revive the Ivalek Crystal Set is said to be without foundation).

EAT YOUR HEART OUT

At the W0AIH/W0UC station W0AIH is for HF contesting, W0UC does the VHF/UHF stuff. There are 42 towers on the property with multiple antennas on just about every band from 160M to about 5GHz. It is most impressive - most people driving by assume its a government installation of some sort.

NCDXC 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On October 10, 1996 the Northern California DX Club (NCDXC) celebrated its 50th anniversary. The anniversary day kicked-off a year of on-the-air events for NCDXC members and DX stations.

ACTIVITIES FOR DX STATIONS

There will be an award given to any DX station who submits a log showing contacts with 50 different NCDXC members during the anniversary year. QSL cards will not be required. A contact with the NCDXC club callsign, W6TI, will count as ten QSOs towards the 50 required. The W6TI club callsign will be activated throughout the year by various club members. Members will be making an effort to work DX stations during the time they are using the callsign. Club members may choose to sign /NCDXC or /50 after their home callsigns to help identify themselves as club members. A certificate commemorating the NCDXC 50th Anniversary will be sent to those stations qualifying. The usual log information (Date,

Time, Station worked & Band) should be included with the submission. Submissions should be sent to the club address as follows:

Northern California DX Club
P.O. Box 608, Menlo Park,
CA 94026-0608, USA

Awards will be mailed out at the completion of the anniversary year - Oct. 10, 1997.

A 50th Anniversary web page has been set up. The information contained in this announcement and more is located at: <http://www.aabg.org/ncdxc50.html>. There is a link on the "Activities for DX Stations" page to the NCDXC club roster. This may be used as a reference to distinguish contacts with NCDXC members from other California stations. A text version of the roster is downloadable from the page.

QSL cards for contacts with the W6TI club callsign should go to the address above with a self addressed envelope and applicable return postage or sent via the bureau.

Ex-ZL9GD GOES QRT

In this age of instant communications via all sorts of rapid means, it has become easier than ever to open our mouths without engaging our brain. I fear we (all of us, including yours truly) may be finding it too easy to express opinions that are not well considered. A most unfortunate consequence of this trend is a tendency to "flame" operators or opinions who, by inexperience or other reason, do not meet our personal concept of "proper DXer". One of the recipients of this treatment was Graham Dawson, ZL4MV, who operated briefly as ZL9GD a while back.

Graham took an HF rig "along for the ride" on a scientific trip to the Auckland Islands. Due to his normal "non-DXer" style of operation, he was not aware of the provision of DXCC rule 8 and much of his operation was from shipboard, not from "land". Thus most

contacts did not "count".

Graham wrote a letter to QST which was reported on page 103 the September 1995 issue. The following quotes should be a wake-up-call to all of us to suppress our tendency to be critical of the efforts of our fellow amateurs until we have "walked a mile in their moccasins".

Excerpts from ZL4MV's letter follow:

"In all honesty, I thought I was doing everyone a great favour by giving them a contact while I was enjoying a great adventure."

"I'm so embarrassed and completely devastated that all of those people are now so bitterly disappointed."

"During the past month we have received many very rude and hurtful letters, faxes, and phone calls from around the world from some amateurs who are very angry with me..."

"As a result of all this abuse, I have now dismantled my HF station and gone QRT from the hobby I have had so much enjoyment for the past 39 years."

Now I agree that most of us might have a thicker hide than Graham and would not react by going permanent QRT, but nonetheless it is very saddening to me that a well-meaning gentleman, albeit inexpert in the ways of DX, has been subjected to this interpretation of the clause in the "Amateurs Code" which goes something like "An Amateur is considerate....". Can we learn from this sad episode?

73, de Hans, K0HB

Ed: I guess we all sympathise with Graham and none would wish to see him go QRT. However, surely it would have been prudent to check with other DX-minded amateurs before mounting such an operation?

CLIPPERTON DX CLUB

1996 CONVENTION

By Don Beattie, G3OZF

Our regular trip to the French Clipperton DX Club convention was this year to Chartres, the beautiful cathedral city some 90 kilometres south-west of Paris. This year, Chris and I were joined by Steve, G4JVG and Eva, 2E1FHJ, for the trip. Travelling separately were Roger (G3KMA) and Gill, Martin (G3ZAY) and Andrew (G0HSD).

We decided to take an extra day, and cross over from Portsmouth and Le Havre by the overnight boat on the Thursday, to allow us to have the Friday exploring again Chartres. Despite predictions of high winds, the crossing was tranquil, and we arrived in Le Havre at 07.00 on the Friday. A couple of hours drive (and a stop for an excellent continental breakfast !) and were in Chartres. I am always impressed by the sight of the mighty cathedral rising out of the fields as you approach the town. Unfortunately this time, the haze was such that we didn't really see the Cathedral until we were within two or three miles of the town.

We spent the day looking around the town, the old buildings and the cathedral, although the weather could have been warmer. Later in the afternoon, after a short rest it was down to drinks and dinner, as many of the other convention attendees began to arrive.

On the Saturday morning, a brief interlude for the XYLs to look at the shops, and then back for a typical French lunch followed by the beginning of the convention proper. The agenda for the convention was a mixture of videos from various DXpeditions, a talk from Roger on IOTA, and competitions - CW pile-up, SSB pile-up and "Doctor of DX" which tested to the limit the entrants' knowledge of the backwoods of DXCC and IOTA. Over 100 amateurs attended the convention, mostly from France. From outside

France, there was Rudi, HB9RG, Patrick, 5N0T, the "G" contingent and Trey, WN4KKN, who is in Europe for a month or two. The videos were of MV Island (R1MJI) operation, XF4, 9M6P, S0 (F6EXV/F2VX and the Lynx DX Group) and WRTC 96.

At the most enjoyable dinner on the Saturday evening, prizes were awarded for the afternoon's competitions. Winner of the CW pile-up was G3KMA (G3OZF was 3rd) and G3ZAY came second in the phone pile-up. F5PYI won the "Doctor of DX" by a significant margin. The evening ended with the Tombola prizes being drawn, and finally with G3ZAY, G0HSD and G4JVG being inducted into the "Bordeaux DX Group". This again, as last year when I became a member of the Group, involved mainly drinking some Bordeaux, lots of congratulations and a fine certificate!

The Sunday, after a lazy start, we returned via Giverny, the village where Monet lived for many years. We were able to visit the gardens which he loved so much and which featured in many of his paintings. A pleasant end to what has become a regular trip for us, signifying the end of the summer season and the plunge into autumn.

Next year's Clipperton is expected to be either Nantes or Toulouse. I can recommend it as a pleasant weekend break. See you there ?



OM5ZM seems to have the right combination of interests!

ANTENNAS

TRAP LOSSES

The following was taken from a note on the Internet by Tony, K1KP

In the course of various discussions on this and other reflectors, there has been considerable debate on the real effect of trap losses in trapped triband antennas. In particular, Force 12 markets their C3 antenna with the assertion that 2 elements per band, with no traps, results in more true gain than more elements, with traps.

In an attempt to get a handle on this subject, I recently made some measurements which would serve to give some idea as to the truth of these arguments.

Part of this summer's antenna projects at K1KP involved removing a KT-34XA from the top of my tower while the tower was being rebuilt. I've had the XA down on the lawn for most of the summer. This particular antenna was first purchased as a KT-34 in 1983. I purchased it used from the original owner in about 1988, when I did the first rebuild on it. I added the XA kit and did another rebuild, in 1993. So when the antenna came down early this summer, it had 3 seasons on it. It was working properly on all bands.

Initial visual inspection showed 7 out of 40 of the blue capacitor caps were cracked. I also did DC resistance measurements of the traps and found that most traps had a total series resistance of 30-50 mΩ (milliohms). Two of the traps had resistance of 200-300 mΩ. I traced the high resistance to the large end of the most outboard shorting strap (15 meter section).

I called KLM and spoke to Bruce about the caps. He said they should have lasted 10 years in normal UV exposure, and that there

were only 3 explanations for their premature failure. These were (1) installation with a hammer; (2) installation using oils as lubricant; or (3) bad lot of plastic. I told him I hadn't used (1) or (2), and he very kindly sent me a replacement set for NO CHARGE, to replace the set I had bought for the prior rebuild. I'd call that great service from an antenna maker! I rebuilt the antenna using the new caps. Bruce told me that the best way to install the caps was to warm them up in hot water. This is a great tip! They went on really easily once they were warm.

In an effort to eliminate the high resistance in the 15 meter straps, I drilled the bottom side of each end of the straps into the element tube and pinned them with a 1/8 inch pop rivet. This ensures no rotation of the straps around the elements. We'll see how this mod works out in a few years.

Out of curiosity, while I had the antenna apart, I measured the resonant frequencies of each element. They were pretty much as expected. Next, I attempted to quantify the power loss of the traps as follows:

I set the antenna up on my driveway on sawhorses. Although the antenna was only 30" off the blacktop, it had reasonable SWR on all three bands. I fed the antenna with 100 feet of RG-8/U cable, whose loss was within spec. I used a Fluke 80T-150U temperature probe, connected to a Fluke handheld DVM to measure temperature. All measurements are in degrees Fahrenheit. During the experiments, I measured temperature at three locations - the strap connected to the 10 meter capacitor on the front driven element; the boom, just behind the front driven element; and the PL-259 connecting the feedline to the supplied KLM balun. I measured the boom temperature as a means of watching for changes in ambient

temperature. I made the measurements starting at 5:30 PM on a nice warm, sunny day, so the sun was going down and ambient was dropping slowly.

First, I made initial measurements, then gave the antenna a short blast on 20 meters using my IC-765 driving and AL-1200. The RF applied was 1200 watts for 5 minutes. Interestingly enough, the temperature on the outer case of my AL-1200, just over the tube anode, rose from 91 degrees to 253 degrees!

	Boom	Trap	Balun
Initial	85.4	81.7	85.8
Final	85.3	83.2	126.1

So the conclusion here is that the ambient decreased slightly, the trap dissipated some heat, and the balun got warm. No surprise here. Next, I added a piece of foam pipe insulation around the outside of the 10 meter and 15 meter capacitors. This would serve to reduce measurement errors due to air movement cooling the traps. I could easily measure the temperature by poking the temperature probe through a small hole in the insulation. The insulation would allow the heat to build up for a more accurate measurement.

For the next run, I applied 1000 watts of RF on 10 meters for 5 minutes. I figure the 10 meter traps, being parallel resonant on 10, should have some pretty big circulating currents in this mode.

	Boom	Trap	Balun
Initial	82.7	81.8	107.8
Final	81.0	87.2	178.0

So in this mode, the trap temperature rose 5.4 degrees. If you include the fact that ambient dropped 1.7 degrees, this is a net rise of 7.1 degrees. I'm not sure the ambient decrease needs to be factored in, as the insulation on the trap should have prevented it from being cooled; however this will lead to a higher dissipation estimate so I will let it

stand.

Next, in order to quantify the amount of power that 7.1 degrees represents, I installed a 10 ohm power resistor inside the foam, in physical contact with the 10 meter capacitor tube. I applied 7 volts DC across the resistor for 5 minutes, and measured the temperature rise as before:

	Trap
Initial	71.2
Final	83.4

This shows a 12.2 degree rise due to the application of 4.9 watts for 5 minutes. If we assume that the ratio of temperature rise to power dissipated is linear, this means that 2.85 watts were dissipated in the trap.

Now let's extrapolate this measurement of power dissipated in a single 10 meter capacitor to power dissipated as heat in the entire antenna. I'll do two scenarios - conservative and optimistic. First the conservative: Assume that I only accurately measured half of the power dissipated in the trap, i.e. that a similar 2.85 watts was being dissipated in the inductance portion. Also, assume that the same amount of power was dissipated in all of the ten traps of the antenna. This results in a total power dissipation of 57.03 watts. If the antenna was fed with 1000 watts, the efficiency is 94.3%. Or expressed in dB, the resistive losses were 0.25 dB.

Now for the optimistic model: Assume I did measure all of the power dissipated in the trap. Also, modelling tells us that in this antenna, the element currents are not all equal. The front driven has the highest current, the rear driven has somewhat less current, and the parasitic elements have much less current than the front driven. So instead of multiplying the power in one trap by the number of traps, we need to multiply the current in the measured trap by the current ratios given by modelling to get the current (and power) in the other traps. This results

in a total power dissipated of 12.19 watts; efficiency 98.7%; resistive losses of .05 dB.

This analysis does not include the losses in the balun - which can be studied and analysed by itself. For a great reference, see Jerry Sevick's books, and WA2SRQ's posts on feedpoint baluns. As a side note, I considered replacing the KLM balun in one of the earlier rebuilds. There was nothing wrong with it, other than 'looking old'. I bought a cheap 200:50 ohm balun from another source - KLM price was high. Being the enginurd type I am, I tested the two baluns on a network analyser at work. The KLM balun was superior by far, giving a good 50 ohm match over the entire bandwidth. The aftermarket balun was way off - like 25-30 ohms! So I put the 'old looking' balun back up, and returned the replacement unit - no problems!

So in even the most conservative estimates above, the KT-34XA comes out to have an outstanding net forward gain - one which would far exceed that of a trapless C3.

W3LPL 160M ANTENNA FARM

I though DXers would be interested in recent developments in the 160 meter antenna farm at W3LPL..

For the last ten years I've been using quarter wave "ground plane" antennas on 160M suspended from the side of several 200 foot towers I happen to have for the HF bands. I have two ground plane antennas, one favouring Europe/Africa and the other favouring the Pacific/Japan. To the south I use a half-wave sloping dipole suspended from yet another 200 foot tower. Each "ground plane" antenna uses four quarter-wave resonant radials elevated about 12-15 feet. Performance of the "European" ground plane has been "fair", while the "Pacific" ground plane has been spectacular (35 Japanese stations worked during the 1995/1996 season from the east coast, most during two incredible 10 minute sunrise openings).

This year I've undertaken the installation of a 160 "four-square" array. This array consists of one 120 foot tower on an insulated base, and three additional verticals constructed of wire suspended from ropes from the 120 foot tower to several distant towers. The four verticals are separated by 135 feet from one another. A hopefully minor problem, yet to be completed, is the detuning of two nearby towers; a 100 foot tower with a 48 foot boom 15M monobander located 140 feet from the new array, and a 115 foot tower located only 90 feet from the array. Detuning will be accomplished by attaching an approximately 230 foot horizontal wire near the top of each tower; exact length to be initially determined through EZNEC modelling then optimised through experimentation.

As yet, I have not decided if I will use a buried copper wire radial system or elevated radials; however, this antenna system located in the middle of a large grassy field offers the possibility of considerable experimentation and testing -- including on the air testing by some world class contest operators! I plan the leave the existing ground plane and sloping dipole antennas in place for at least a year during the evaluation of the new array (a ham can never have too many antennas!).

Recently WA3WJD and I ran an initial test (only one hour of work) on the 120 foot vertical tower; using an impedance bridge and two alternative simple radial systems. This tower is 300 feet from the nearest tower and there are no nearby trees; the other three verticals were open circuited (i.e. the 120 foot radials laying on the grass were completely disconnected from one another and pulled away from the tower).

No on-the-air or far field testing has yet been done. The test equipment was battery operated and not in close proximity to the ground. More detailed tests with various radial systems will be conducted and documented later. Future access to instrumenta-

tion grade digital impedance measurement equipment would help the accuracy and repeatability of our measurements!
Results from the "quick look" impedance measurements:

For radials laying on the grass field; each consisting of insulated #14 copper wire - 140 feet long:

For 8 radials the feed impedance was aprox 60 ohms at the resonant freq.

For 4 radials the feed impedance was aprox 80 ohms at the resonant freq.

For 2 radials the feed impedance was over 100 ohms at the resonant freq.

For two elevated radials, approximate length 125 feet, elevated approximately 7 feet. Near the tower base, the elevated radials are sloped at a 45 degree angle from their 7 foot height to the base insulator. The radials laying on the grass were completely disconnected from each other and from the test equipment, and pulled away from the tower base.

For two elevated resonant radials the feedpoint impedance was approximately 40 ohms at the resonant freq.

I'll be interested in comments on the above, and I'll occasionally post additional results as work on the array proceeds!

DX ON 160M?

(Easy as climbing Everest)

Brendan McCartney, G4DYO

Before we start, be forewarned - this article will horrify the technical guys who will come away wondering a) how the author ever got a ham ticket and b) how he ever works DX. Folks, these things happen (our US friends have a more lucid term!). I am not a technician (back of the queue when brains were issued) but I like to think of myself as a communicator and it is this aspect of the hobby which thrills me. Spending hours laying six thousand yards of radials

for 160m when I could be working a new one on 17m is not my bag. However, given lots of luck and a following wind, amateurs like me can work DX on the LF bands.

Over the years I have lost count of the number of guys I have heard complain that they could not work DX because of poor antennas, poor equipment, small gardens, etc., etc., (worst excuse probably "*The XYL won't let me put up any aerials!*"). A few months back a G3, commenting on the Cluster Network about the BERU Contest, mentioned that the only DX he had ever worked outside Europe on 160m was PY. Quite obviously, therefore, some people have problems but few are insurmountable if you simply want to make contacts. Of course, if you insist on all your 160m QSLs from A35 carrying "59+20" reports you may have to roll up your sleeves and do slightly more than I am about to suggest here.

This article is aimed at the lazy DXer. Lazy because he doesn't want to spend half his life searching for, or simply cannot afford, a property with 15 acres of garden; lazy because he despises gardening/ hard work/ dirty hands; lazy because he simply wants to sit in the shack and enjoy his hobby. This is for the guy with a coat-hanger sticking out of a grow-bag. This is for the DXer who knows that Partridge wasn't just a bird and joysticks aren't just found in aeroplanes! This is for the man who thinks Smith's Charts are scales of popular potato crisps and who thinks "impedance" is the peculiar sensation you get when you reverse the car into the garage wall. Earth losses? Just the caverns the moles leave under the lawn....

Every True Blue DXer knows how easy it is to work DX on HF - a £5 Quad and 10 watts on 10m will blow the S-meters out of rigs the other side of the world and 240 countries can be in the log before tea-time during sunspot peaks. However, the lower you QSY in frequency the more difficult life becomes and serious measures are required to com-

pete in CQWW 160m, which really sorts the men from the boys. However, all is not lost - remember that the guys with the biggest contest scores are not necessarily serious DXers and often their country scores are lower than those of the amateur who never enters a contest. The serious contest guys have to reach a peak on "The Day", just like the blooms at the Chelsea Flower Show. Weeks or months of hard work must come to fruition during one brief session or all is lost for another year. Massive antennas are magic - we all desperately want them - but the Contest Group's full-sized 4-element Quad on 160m isn't much good if there's been a solar flare and the guy down the street with the wet string may do far better in the days following when conditions peak.

Moral: Don't lose heart just because your local club has a set-up resembling Droitwich and you have to be satisfied with a window-box for a garden.

Ruth and I have a fairly small area in which to erect antennas - the back garden is around 40 ft x 50 ft and I try to keep all my antennas in that area, which also includes a garage, greenhouse and several fair-sized trees. We have a much larger front garden where I have occasionally erected antennas, but I am somewhat reluctant to do this as the overhead mains electricity cables cross the garden diagonally and I don't fancy the idea of some unwieldy vertical arrangement crashing down on the electricity lines - it could disrupt an important QSO!

Anyone who has messed about trying to fit 160m dipoles into an area of 40 ft by 50 ft will know how quickly the whole area degenerates to resemble a deranged spider's web, with wire everywhere. I have also tried various "verticals", although what I had room to erect amongst the trees was reminiscent of a true vertical suffering badly from the effect of a very cold shower - a 15 ft pole does not work well on 160m, especially with no radials. So how could I ever work outside the neighbourhood on Top

Band?

I recalled having read somewhere about 4λ inverted-L antennas achieving reasonable success, although I believe the writer lived over a copper mine and the vertical section of his antenna was around 130 ft high. I also recalled that Don, G3XTT, had achieved remarkable success using a folded inverted L, similar to the G3HCT Folded Vertical for 40m which I had employed with great success (but Don also had six miles of wire under his tomatoes. Hi!). I further recalled something about "counterpoises" - lengths of wire running horizontally beneath long-wire antennas to provide some sort of assistance with tuning - far too technical for me to understand, but worth trying out.

Right, to work. 160m 4λ Inverted-L plus counterpoise, here we come. It looked like the only place to feed a long-wire was right outside the shack window (I'd only got 20 ft of coax), with the antenna wire running up the wall on to the mast holding the TV aerial, thence along the garden to the HF tower. This would mean 20 ft vertical and 60 ft horizontal sections with around 50 ft left over to be strung around fence-posts, trees, etc. I wasn't too keen on this as Ruth had been known to potter around the garden occasionally and, some years back, Keith, G3VKW, nearly set fire to his Mum's roses with a non-resonant Inverted-Vee; a brilliant joke, but I didn't fancy melting the hand that fed me! Another problem was that to lay a counterpoise would involve drilling holes through the kitchen and sitting room walls and running the wire under the carpet, in order to follow the line of the horizontal section of the L, as surely one must? There must be a simpler way? By chance I found a fairly long length of coax which had been acquired for the WG0JFK (or was it the GK0JFK) operation; in fact enough to reach the end of the back garden from the shack.

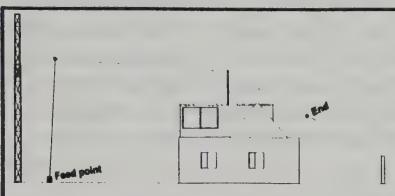
Hence, plan 2. The feed point would be towards the far end of the back garden, next to

the fence and some 15 ft from the bottom of the HF tower. The antenna would be pulled up by a halyard from the tower to produce a 40+ foot vertical (as vertical as a sailor in Portsmouth on a Friday night). The remaining 90-odd feet would be pulled over the house, via an egg insulator on the TV aerial mast, and tied down in the front garden (older amateurs will recall that an "egg insulator" is not a device to prevent your egg from melting on Easter Sunday). This was a slightly "non-textbook" Inverted-L, but not having a 40 foot pole in the front garden meant that a true horizontal section was impossible.

The counterpoise still could not be laid under the entire length of the horizontal top section without going through the house so I decided to experiment with folding the counterpoise to squeeze it all into the back garden. A suitable anchoring point was manufactured for the antenna feed-point - a 2" x 2" x 2 ft wooden stake was driven into the ground - and, by way of a token earth, a short piece of copper water-pipe was driven in alongside. A chocolate-block connector was screwed to the stake, coax connected, inverted L pulled up the tower. Nothing to consume a serious BBC Aerial Rigger with envy, but we were in business. Last bit - a good watering around the earth stake!

Using only a sniff of RF I cautiously checked the SWR, which was pretty high. I had purposely cut the antenna somewhat longer than required, having learned from experience that a) antennas are never the length determined by theory and b) it's always easier to shorten rather than lengthen a piece of wire (this boy is not just good looking you know). I popped outside and chopped off about a foot of the antenna, went back in and checked the SWR - it had dropped from around 5:1 to 4.9:1 so I was definitely going the right way! Another foot off, another small drop; a larger piece off, a larger drop in SWR. Eventually, and to my amazement, the SWR bridge read 1:1 with

an Inverted L of around 120 feet in length. Wow! Some success; must be the magic counterpoise doing it? Don't you believe it!



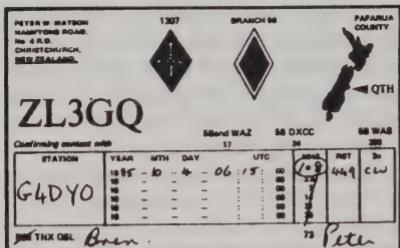
G4DYO 160m Master Antenna!

This antenna was erected in late 1982. Previously I had used various bits of wire to work inter-G and near Europe on 160m with reasonable success but I had never heard any real DX on the band. On 21 January, 1983 at 2130z I heard a European station working VK6HD. To my utter amazement I could hear Mick 569! My trembling hand could hardly send my call when they had finished.....

*"VK6HD de G4DYO, G4DYO, G4DYO, KN".
"G4DYO de VK6HD, 449 BK".*

No QRM, nothing, just Mick replying to me. Somehow I acknowledged the report and fell off the chair. Had this really happened? I simply had to QSL this contact, but my appalling set-up on 160m required more than a simple QSL card. Next morning I went outside and, wearing my best Rabbi's garb, cut six inches off the antenna, which I sent to VK6HD with my card - somewhat gingerly as I was sure I had worked a pirate. But, what's this? When I went to the feed-point I discovered that I had not connected the counterpoise and the only "earth" had been the short piece of copper pipe to which I had connected the braid of the coax!!! AND, I had used a genuine 10 watts for the contact. Heck, why bother with a counterpoise if I can work VK without one? A week later Mick's card arrived, with a letter of encouragement for my efforts. I was to get to know him quite well several years later when I became the editor of DXNS, but I have never worked another VK on 160m since that day.

The antenna was taken down early in 1983 but re-erected in a similar configuration during the autumn of that year (with just the copper earth stake) when I worked Willy, UA9CBO for my first Asiatic Russian on 160m. In the winter of 1984 I worked the USA - just too e-a-s-y and in October 1985 using a similar set up I worked ZL3GQ - at 0617z on the long path I gave him 559 and received 449 on a very quiet band. Again I thought it must have been a Slim, but a fast exchange of QSL cards proved it really was Peter I had worked.



December 1985 produced PY, UL, UG and a few other fairly good contacts. As usual, one or two bread-and-butter QSLs were hard to get, but I finally got my 160m WAC in January, 1989 - it remains one of my most cherished amateur radio awards.



Eventually the inverted L fell down and was never re-erected, although the feed point remained in situ for some years. In late 1993 I erected a new super-Inverted L, primarily in hope of finally knocking off the elusive Zone 31 on 80m (I'd had 199 Zones con-

firmed for 5BWAZ for longer than I cared to remember). Most of my 200+ countries on 80m had been worked using a bog-standard Inverted-Vee fed at the top of the HF tower, but the results were never dramatic. The new antenna consisted of a 35 ft aluminium vertical in the front garden with about 35 ft of horizontal wire top section running over the house towards the tower on a halyard. Three rolls of chicken wire and every available length of wire I could find were strewn out over the front garden (great fun for the postman, who was used to cutting across the lawn. He won't do that again in a hurry!).

This antenna worked at least as well as the Vee, but I never heard anything resembling KH6 on 80m. For little more than ten minutes work I extended the top section to resonate the antenna on 160m. Without any trouble at all I worked A7, 4X, W and JA, all with good signals so it worked fairly well on Top Band too. Whether that was due to the "extensive" earth system, or a higher top section, or better propagation I do not know, but I never even heard VK or ZL during that LF season and the antenna was dismantled in the spring of 1994. The aluminium pole was later used to support an Inverted Vee for 80m, which put a good signal into Reading when conditions were up!

Because you have a smallish garden and a poor antenna don't think you cannot work around the world on 160m. Use the DX-Edge sensibly and you will soon be able to calculate the best time for listening for LF-DX. Don't despair because you cannot erect a 200 ft high vertical or lay a large earth system. Don't imagine that it is only those with massive antennas who can work LF-DX. Most of all, don't give up; if I did it anyone can.

THE LAZY MAN'S LF DXer

by Mike Parker, G4IUF

There seems to be a preconception among the DX fraternity generally that, in order to achieve anything on the LF bands its neces-

sary to stay up all night, or at least until 3 or 4 am. This attitude seems to be fostered by some of the DXers themselves. Well, as the song says, it ain't necessarily so. The latest I've ever stayed up (except in contests) is 0100, and the earliest rising is 0530, not I hasten to add within the same 24 hour period. Despite this I've 99 confirmed on 160 meters, 299 on 80, and 265 on 40. When my somewhat poor 160 antenna (a dipole at 20-50ft in a Z formation) is considered, that's not bad going. The 40 meter score would be higher if I didn't spend so much time on 80, my favourite band. So, how come?

The first factor I can take no credit for - the ground, which is 400ft of morainic clay on a slope with a high water table, there is also quite a bit of wire mesh etc. buried under the garden which helps. The second is the antennas, I use a half wave sloping dipole on 80 in v formation, and despite various experiments, have never found anything better which fits the size constraints, these include quarter wave slopers, delta loops (best on rocky/sandy ground) and verticals. On 40 I now have a 2 element yagi (the C4XL), but used rotary dipoles and dipoles in the past, I generally operate in line with the conditions at the time of year, i.e. evenings in summer and winter, mornings in spring and autumn, paying special attention to the grey line paths. Apart from weekends my times are (local) around 0645-0735, 1750-2300 which I don't think are too strenuous. In winter at weekends an 80 I've worked ZL up to 0940, west coast US up to 0915, east coast up to 1130 and at 1340, and KH6 at 0900, so even the late risers have a chance.

In mid-summer there tends to be a period of a few weeks when the QRN level is very low, this is an excellent opportunity to pick up African and South American countries from around an hour before sunset onwards. An important factor to consider is mode. Most antennas (certainly mine) are not capable of covering the SSB and CW sections of the band; therefore, unless there is suffi-

cient space for two or more, a decision must be made on which mode to operate. I have found over the years that most DX appears on SSB, with the odd annoying exception, so mine is cut for 3,790. For CW 3510 would be a good choice but an antenna cut for the middle of the band, using ATU for both windows, is not an option due to the low signal strengths involved, especially for the rarer locations.

One factor which causes a lot of friction in the 80m window is occupancy. There is no point in stations sitting a KHz apart calling CQ DX: they won't hear any because of the splatter, so people tend to gather together 3 or 4 KHz apart and take it in turns to call and work whatever shows up in order. There are at least two list operations most evenings, which causes some of the purists strife. However, the alternative is worse, as can be seen when there is a contest and the REAL DX worked during a 48hr contest is generally less than during a normal session. OK, you may get a couple of hundred east coast/mid-west US and Canadian stations, but the Pacific and far-east are usually conspicuous by their absence, from my logs at least.

One consideration which may be useful, if using any type of directional antenna, is to put the null in the direction of SE Europe - the only thing you miss is long path to the US West Coast and 8Q. To me the reduction in the QRM is well worth the sacrifice.

I hope the foregoing is of some use to somebody, so have fun and see you in the pile-ups.

KT34XA PROBLEMS?

Writing on the Internet John Devoldere, ON4UN says:

Over the past few years I used a KT34XA as a multiplier antenna on 10/15/20. That antenna belonged to ON4WW and was assembled some 5 years ago, and had a good

SWR on all 3 bands.

18 months ago I bought a few KT34XA's together with some friends. I assembled mine recently. It is built exactly as specified in the manual, all dimensions are within 0.1 inch of what's in the booklet. This has been triple-checked by me and a few friends.

The SWR is good on 20 and 10, but is very poor on 15. On 15 it is 1.7/1 on 21.0 and raises to nearly 4/1 on 21.45.

I called KLM, and their engineer (Bruce) told me that that happens to about 30 % of the yagis they sell. I could not get a satisfactory explanation why. Bruce gave me an obscure explanation about the fact that he really should specify electrical dimensions, but that the physical dimensions did not always reflect the intended electrical dimensions ??? I asked what are the variables that would make the relation between physical and electrical dimensions vary, but did not get any answer. Bruce told me that I should try shortening the five 15 m trap straps about 3/4 inch.

I have checked with two more friends that have bought KT34XA's in the past years and both report similar problems. One has shortened one 15 m trap shorting bar about 2 inches, the other has shortened the 15 m trap shorting bars 2 inches on all five elements.

Before I start butchering my yagi, is there anyone who has had similar problems with their KT34XA's or rather recent vintage? And if so, what did you do to solve the problem?

TEE v ELL

There have been prolonged discussions on the Top Band Reflector about the advantages and disadvantages of various antenna configurations. Here's CDXC member Mike Devereux's contribution:

Here at G3SED I have a Horizontal Dipole at 85ft and since January of this year an In-

verted L. Both antennas are in a field about 400ft from my house.

In July I improved the Inverted L thus:

- a) I increased the vertical section from 65 to 75ft high.
- b) I increased the overall length to 165ft using a series C to match the base to 50 Ohm coax.
- c) I put down seventy five 135ft radials laid on the ground and a square approx 30ft by 30ft of chicken wire at the base of the vertical.

Comparing the dipole to the inverted L (The two antennas are approx 200 ft apart):

- a) at my sunset UA9 stations at 3000 miles are three or four S points down on the Dipole.
- b) at East coast US sunset the Dipole is three or four S points down on the inverted L.
- c) from around 0100Z East coast USA stations are approx. 1 1/2 S points down on the dipole.
- d) Most other times and directions the dipole is approx one to two S points down on the Inverted L. (comparisons done during July/Aug/Sept 96).

Since upgrading the ground system on my inverted L I have the Gut feeling my signals have improved by around 5 or 6 db. Not very scientific I know, but I do have 33 yrs of experience on 160 HI!

The Dipole is a quiet RX antenna compared to the Inverted L but my 1500 ft E-W Beverage beats the pants off both of them in its favoured direction.

I believe that I will not easily find another antenna to improve on the TX performance of this Inverted L - the effort now will be in better RX antennas.

From January of this year I have worked 136 Countries on 160 with the inverted L before and after the improvements - to me it's a great DX antenna !!

PROPAGATION

Jim Smith, G0OFE

Solar Summary

August/September 1996

After the slight rise in solar activity seen in July (raising faint hopes that Cycle 23 might be underway), activity fell back to the levels seen for most of the year, i.e. close to rock bottom! The faint hope that Cycle 23 might be underway that I expressed in my last column seems to have been well and truly dashed! There is no sign of the new cycle yet.

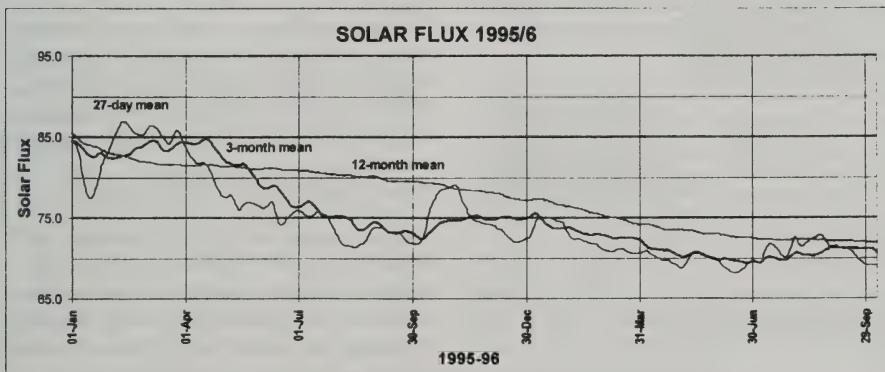
Average solar flux in August and September was 72.5 and 69.4 sfu respectively. That figure for September was the second lowest this year, only April was lower. The sun had no visible sunspots at all for 23 out of the 30 days in Sept. The highest daily reading was 80 on 1/2 August, and the lowest was 66 on 15th September. The running 27-day average of solar flux began the period at 72 units, peaked at 23 units towards the end of August, then fell to 69 units by the end of Sept. The 3-month mean remained close to 71 units throughout.

The annual smoothed solar flux at the end of September (and therefore centred on March 1996) fell to 71.9 units, the lowest since the minimum of Cycle 18, in April 1954. This could fall close to 71 by the end of October,

if the 'hump' in activity in October last year is not matched.

I have included a graph of solar activity in 1995/96 this month. The three lines show mean solar activity over 27 days, 3 months and 12 months. Note that the shorter-term averages vary more than the longer-term 3 and 12-month means. Note the already-mentioned 'hump' in activity last October, which coincided nicely with the CQWW-SSB contest. As you can see, the 12-month mean has been falling steadily throughout, but the rate of decline has slowed noticeably in the last six months or so. I'm fairly new to playing with graphs in Microsoft Excel (which is where I store and analyse my solar data), however I hope that the graphs will show clearly the rise of Cycle 23 before too long!

As if the low solar flux wasn't enough, there was a considerable and unwelcome rise in geomagnetic activity at the end of August and in September. The 27-day average A-index almost doubled from 7 to 13.5 units by the end of September, and there were six days with the A-index over 20 units. Previous to this, only 3 days had A-indices of over 20 in the first seven months of the year. The higher bands have been very quiet most of the time as a result.



PARCHMENT PAGE

THE ZL2000 AWARD

- (1) This Award will be available to all licensed Amateurs & SWL's.
- (2) Only ONE contact is eligible per year with one of the Gisborne stations using the ZL2000 call-sign.
- (3) All operators using the ZL2000 call-sign must be full members of the Gisborne Amateur Radio Club.
- (4) Any valid amateur frequency may be used by either Phone or CW
- (5) The contact can only be made during the month of January each year.
- (6) The Award commences: 0001 Hrs. (NZ. Time) 1st. January 1997, (1101 Hrs. UTC. 31-12-96). The Award concludes: 2400 Hrs. (NZ. Time) 31st. January 2000. (1100 Hrs. UTC. 31st. January 1999).
- (7) All valid contacts with ZL2000 will be sent a QSL card via NZART QSL Bureau.
- (8) The Award for each year will only be issued upon receipt of the application fee. (I.e. \$5.00 Australia & NZ. or US\$10).
- (9) The application fee for the Award should reach us by June 30th. of the year that the contact is made. (Late entries will be processed at the discretion of the ZL2000 Award Committee.)
- (10) A different pictorial Award will be issued each year.
- (11) Any operator or SWL, collecting four Awards, including the year 2000, will be issued with a Complimentary Award.
- (12) One Amateur operator or SWL, meeting the requirements of Rule 11, will be chosen to receive a special Award in the year 2000.

Any queries to: ZL2RIC P.O.Box 1017, Gisborne. 3815. New Zealand.

THE YASME AWARD

The YASME Foundation offers a beautiful award (plaque) to anyone who submits QSL cards showing contact with 30 YASME operations/operators. For proof of 60 contacts, a trophy in the shape of the sailboat "YASME" is given!

Your QSL cards must show contact with:

- 1) YASME sponsored expeditions regardless of operator, such as FO0XX, XF4L, 3D2AM, etc.;
- 2) YASME officials under the various calls they may have used, each being a separate credit; or
- 3) Any station using a call issued to a YASME official, regardless of operator.

Award application should be made by letter to Dick McKercher W0MLY, Box 7, Rippey, Iowa 50235. Include your name, call, address, QSL cards, and list of the stations with dates and bands. Awards are sent via UPS, so please be sure to provide a shipping address, no Post Office box.

For more information you may write (send SASE) The YASME Foundation, P. O. Box 2025, Castro Valley, CA 94546-2025.

IIA: NEW SOFTWARE

The latest release of the Italian Islands Award software is distributed by Marco, IK0QOB free of charge (just send Marco an SASE + a formatted disk). The program is also available on the Internet; just point your browser at:

<http://www-dx.deis.unibo.it/htdx/index.html>

This new release includes the up-to-date list of the IIA islands (with their IOTA Reference Number if applicable) and enables the island chaser to print the application for the award.

PSE QSL TNX

QSL CORNER



Yes, I know it's pretty boring, but nobody else submitted anything - and a G4DYO card is mega-rare! However, it does demonstrate how easy it is to produce one's own, albeit simple, cards using modern WP packages. The cards are printed in full colour text, back and front, complete with various logos and they work out at around £10 per thousand. NO - no orders please!!

FROM LONG AGO...

K5QHS AFRICAN EXPEDITION 1976

/FL8 French Somaliland

/FH8 Mayotte

D6A Comoros 1st Allowed Operation

The DLs put on a pretty good effort from D6 back in late August, but this is the card for the historic, very first D6 operation by K5QHS in July, 1976. San made some 1,526 QSOs with 73 countries during his short stopover as part of an Indian Ocean trip.

KC6JF

Cards sent to: Joe, PO Box 66, Koror, Palau, 96940 are definitely answered, but please be patient as the reply often takes some months.

T3 QSLING

Jack Shurtliff, K7EHI, writes: "Effective immediately, I am no longer the QSL manager for T32AF, T30A, T30BC or T32BC. Glenn, KH6UR, the T32AF operator, has not been active since May of 1994. His business schedule is such that he will not be active again in the foreseeable future. Henry, the operator for T30A, T30BC, and T32BC has been a silent key since July 1993. None of the operations are self supporting as of late. KH6UR is unable to assume responsibility for his operations and does not have any use for the logs. He has requested I send what few blank QSL cards that are left to him. There are also some cards left for T30A.

"I will hold all logs and cards here pending any arrangement short of disposing of all. However I am no longer financially able to support these duties or ship same at my expense. If some one is willing to support these duties and pay for the shipping, I will clear the arrangement with Glenn and box all items for shipment. I estimate there is around 40 pounds of logs and cards".

MADAGASCAR



This is the rather attractive card you'll get if you work 5R8EN - either resident op Gerard, F2JD, or his visiting QSL Manager Jean-Michel, F6AJA.

A BATCH FROM THE BUREAU

Roger Western, G3SXW.



A parcel arrives here every month or so from my RSGB QSL bureau sub-manager, always bringing with it a few nice little surprises. As I'm not a collector of QSLs for the home

station these cards are nearly all requests for a card from one of various DXpeditions in recent years. Several contain interesting or friendly comments and some are from old pals.

The other day I came home to find an envelope from the bureau on the door-mat. It was much smaller than usual. As I am not managing QSLs for the two most recent contest efforts (TU5A and TY5A) I thought maybe the flood of cards for previous call-signs was finally easing. Moments later a neighbour knocked the front door to hand me a much larger package that was left with him by the postman. This month's batch indicates no easing of the flood!

A batch, as in this case, of 600 or so cards takes three or four evenings to process. Nonetheless I target to get the replies back to the outgoing bureau within a couple of weeks and usually manage to achieve that. QSLing is a high priority and as the process of working their way through the system is of necessity a slow one the very least I can do is to not add to the overall delay.

HANDLING

The mechanics for handling a bureau batch can be quite challenging. A part of my shack is allocated to the "QSL factory". When cards come in for many different call-signs a stock of blanks for each call is of course needed, ready to hand, but also all the log-books. I am a reasonably well organised in-

dividual but not that well - unfortunately each DXpedition seems to finish up with logs in different formats. Some have a full stock of printed labels and a booklet containing all calls worked alphabetically with the bands for each, plus a chronological log-book. These are for trips made with Nigel, G3TXF. Now there is an organised individual: labels and files were supplied by him, making my life a great deal easier. In other cases it may be a dupe sheet per band, or even just a hand-written log.

So the first step is to sort the cards into call-sign order according to whom they are addressed, i.e. my call. This time there were 20 different calls, including some mis-directs. Listed chronologically by the date of the contact the number of cards received was as follows:

Date	Call	Nr Cards
Feb89	C56/G3SXW	1
May91	H44SX	7*
Aug92	ZC4SXW	1
Oct92	3DA/G3SXW	7
Feb93	G3-misdirect 1 (redirect to bureau)	
Sep93	ZD9SXW	43
Nov93	ZF2WW	59*
Oct94	XX9TSX	29
Nov94	9G5AA	63
Nov94	9G5SX	3
Jan95	G3SXW/50	2
Sep95	9N1SXW	284
Nov95	9G5SX	46
Nov95	TY5A (redirect to GM4AGL) 9	
Nov95	TY5SXW	2
Nov95	GX0AAA (redirect to G3TXF) 2	
Feb96	TU/G3SXW	36
Feb96	TU5A (redirect to W8AEF) 1	
Jun96	GI0AAA/P (redirect to G3TXF) 2	
Various	G3SXW	14
Various	5N0/G3SXW (returned) 2	
	Total	614

* = mostly "Thanks QSL" cards.

COMMENTS

Quite a number of comments come to mind. In the case of ZF2WW all contacts were QSLed 100% via the bureau after the direct requests stopped arriving. These were sent in Sep 94. Nearly all of those 59 cards were "Thanks". So we can see that the return trip took just under two years, including any delay introduced by the other guy not replying to his bureau batch right away. As many of these thanks cards have been arriving over recent months I attribute a goodly proportion of this delay to handling-time by the replying station. For many countries it would seem that the return trip can be well under one year.

Then there are one-off happenings. For example, a few months ago there was a vast influx of cards from Japan for long-ago operations, suggesting that perhaps their bureau had a bottle-neck on which they were catching up. The OE bureau seem to adopt an unusual system: they collect cards till there is sufficient to post but then send them direct in the post to the manager. Every year or so I receive a batch of OE cards direct. This of course reduces pressure on the bureaux of other societies, RSGB in this instance.

ACCURATE DISTRIBUTION

Perhaps the most amazing fact that needs highlighting is the incredibly high rate of correct distribution. Firstly, by stations themselves - the redirects listed above are caused by the station sending their card to me instead of to the correct QSL manager but these are a really tiny fraction of cards received. Only 16 of these 614 cards (less than 3%) were addressed to me incorrectly by the originating station (and correctly distributed to me by the bureau). All the other 97% or so came from people who found out where to send their cards.

Even more astonishing is that of 614 cards received in the current batch only O N E was misdirected by the bureau system. What

an amazing service this is. A main reason for wanting to pen this short article is to publicly acknowledge the sterling work done by all bureau helpers and to personally thank them for a job VERY well done. They should be truly proud of the accuracy rate.

Another conclusion from this data may be that anyone going on DXpeditions must expect to receive bureau cards for at least four years afterwards. With the very odd exception I am finding that requests for earlier trips (call-signs) have dried up within that time.

Another aspect is the return rate when the contact cannot be found in the log. The "not in log" rate is always less than 5% and often less than 2%. The variance depends on the DXpedition as of course the larger the pile-ups the more frequent these are. It is always disappointing to have to send back a card so a major hunt through the log is conducted first, also checking for similar call-signs around the stated time.

Two final comments: "If it moves, analyse it!" You never know what you may learn. Secondly, again, thank you sincerely to all

QSL TNX ✓

It was fairly quiet at the club meeting, what with the freezing conditions and the poor HF conditions encouraging other part-time activities. However, the usual stalwarts were there, with the Wise Old President checking the Honor Roll listings in the latest QST in his usual spot - right next to the only radiator in the room! The snow had been falling for several hours and back home the Quad wires were about 2cm thick with ice so hard that the 2kW from the linear had little effect in melting it.

Half way through the evening one of the younger locals came in waving a fancy looking QSL card, "*Look at this, HS on 80m and I never knew I worked it!*" Wow! Everyone gathered around to see this rarity and the WoP glanced up from reading QST over

the top of his half-specs; HS on 80m was a nice catch, especially for a guy who was a Novice only a year ago, and a lot of people needed Zone 26 on 80m for 5BWAZ. The HS boys can only use 80m during contests so we don't get many shots at Zone 26 on that band.

The local went on, his voice three octaves higher than usual with excitement: "It was during CQWW SSB last year; there was a spot on the cluster for an HS at the top end of 80m.. I could just about hear him and I spent half an hour, on and off, shouting in the pile-up but I never heard him come back. Then, guess what? A few weeks ago I received a card in the buro from a Russian SWL asking for my card for 80m and guess which QSO he quoted? Yes - the one with the HS! I looked up the manager for the HS, popped my card in the post with a couple of IRCs and 'bingo' I got my QSL today!"

The WoP took off his specs and rose slowly from his chair: "Did you say you didn't realise you'd made the contact but now you have a QSL confirming it?", he said. "That's right; guess it was a real lucky break", said the local, "if it hadn't been for that Russky SWL I would never have known. That's 20 Zones confirmed on 80m and I only run a dipole."

"So", said the WoP, choosing his words carefully (he wasn't the sort of guy to use a sentence when a word would do), "if a fisherman woke up one morning and found someone had dumped a shark in his dustbin he'd count that as a fair catch - right?"

The club members turned to the WoP, knowing that when he spoke his words were full of wisdom. "Er, well, I guess not, because he wouldn't have actually made the catch himself", said the local, with considerable doubt creeping into his voice.

"Right. There is only one type of real QSO - the one you make yourself, with callsigns clearly copied by both sides of the QSO",

said the WoP. "If you did not exchange at least callsigns with the HS you did not make a valid QSO. There are plenty of cheats in ham radio.....", "...but they're only cheating themselves, right?" broke in the local, looking somewhat crestfallen.

"Not just themselves", said the WoP. "When they join DXCC; maybe even reach Honor Roll; their figures are published for everyone to see, just like the results of a contest. Whilst they are cheating themselves they are also lowering the integrity of the whole award system."

"Guess I see your point, but how about....", his voice trailed away. (He was about to bring up the subject of net operating, which he reckoned had to be OK because the net controller absolutely guarantees that the contact has taken place, if need be by relaying callsigns and reports to the parties concerned....) "I guess there's only one place for this card", and he threw it in the waste bin.

"Fine business", said the WoP, sitting back down beside the radiator. He too needed HS on 80 - but he sure as hell didn't need Zone 26 - he had an 80m card from VU4GDG/CVP in the shoe-box!

Son of a Gun! What can one say, except "I wish I was the WoP!"

(Ed: With apologies to you-know-who and, yes, this is based on true facts! Here's the HS QSL, with certain details erased for conscience protection!!):



KEYBOARD CORNER

CQ INTERNET

g4dyo@aol.com

During my term as editor of DXNS I received constant suggestions to join the Internet for the purpose of passing DX news. I steadfastly refused. After all, we are *supposed* to be people specialising in communication and there is a FREE amateur radio VHF BBS Network, plus numerous HF mailboxes, supporting world-wide communication. However, spurred on by Don Field's excellent articles in this publication I recently succumbed to the technological pressure of living in the 20th century and ran a trial Internet programme. OK, I give in, the Internet is super, mega f-a-n-t-a-s-t-i-c, fabulous, mind-blowing, great fun, thoroughly addictive and the system carries more information on any subject anywhere. BUT... I still do not see it as a prime mover for amateur radio information, whether it's of a DX nature or not. I still believe that a similar service could be provided far more cheaply by the BBS Network (several DX bulletins available on Internet are free on the BBS or PacketCluster networks) and the various weekly DX newsletters. That said, without doubt, there is useful amateur radio information available on the Internet and DXers will have to join in or miss out - there seems to be no other option - so long as you are prepared to fork out a major contribution to BT's profits via your steadily increasing phone bills!

I was disappointed with the various "Reflectors", which had been sold as "The Place To Be". The four which I checked: DX, Contest, TopBand and Tower, were all simply forums for US amateurs to either argue with each other or to go on endlessly about matters a million miles away from the subjects which the reflector was supposed to be for. A prime example is the new US

"Vanity" callsigns, which have taken up more space on the reflectors than any other matter in the last month or so.

A check of the DX Reflector subscription list showed that the vast majority of users were in the USA, with just a few dozen in the UK. However, you'd be amazed at the people hiding in the depths of the World Wide Web; my first contribution to the VE7TCP DX Reflector brought forth responses from guys I'd been watching the obituary columns for! Unfortunately, just as there are wallies on the Cluster, there are wallies on Internet and one "ham" suggested an "Internet DXCC"!! The following reply from a (sane) US amateur resulted:

"Hams have only themselves to blame for this. How many hours per day do we now spend "working" reflectors, rec.radio., and e-mail, discussing amateur radio issues, mostly in communications that would have been accomplished in individual or net QSOs during more primitive times? What does your log look like compared the days before you were connected? Do you report your contest score on 3830@whereverthehell_it_is.com or on the real 3830?

"It's easy to be seduced. A little Murphy here and there notwithstanding, the 'net has 20-over-9 sigs, Q5 copy, and no QRM/QRN. No nasty fone calls from neighbors or knocks-at-the-door over RFI. And you virtually always get thru assuming you aren't running some boat-anchor ISP. You can even talk business and swear, anything almost is legal. Big Don doesn't even have to identify!"

"So the LEO folks are ripping off our freqs, no-code all-band HF tickets are right around the corner, Kenwood is selling ham gear at truck stops, and Internet "operators" are fighting for the first "Net-DXCC".

*"Do we want to turn off our computers?
Not me. My HF gear will gather dust until
the P5 shows up, assuming his sig is strong
enough to copy thru the "10-4 Good-buddy"
smoky-bear reports on 14.195.*

*"Ham radio is dead. Got a good e-mail address for Seven-Oscar? Some guy who isn't too cheap, or uninterested, to reply?
Big Don, Internet Operator"*

So, is G4DYO going to remain a subscriber to this crazy system? Yes - not so much for the Reflectors but Email is useful. For those already hooked, or for those about to be so, here are a few more interesting web sites with no guarantee that they're still operational as pages change overnight. (Prefix ALL addresses with <http://>):

home1.swipnet.se/~w-17565/ is a brilliant page devoted to DXpeditions and related matters, overseen by Mats SM7PKK.

www-dx.deis.unibo.it contains a gallery of "DXCC countries by picture". This page, run by our Italian friends, really is most excellent and some of the pics will be appearing in CDXC Newsletter.

www.pcok.com-n5ogp/okdxa/ is the Oklahoma DX Association site.

The world famous Frankford Radio Club home page is on: www.frc-contest.org

ocean.st.usm.edu/~gejones/ssidxghp.html is the South Sandwich Island DX Group page with some very exciting news about forthcoming operations.

www.n2hos.com/digital/ is the Digital Journal, where you Kings of the Keyboard can check out the latest RTTY information.

www.digi.com.br/users/brazil/ps7ab.html for the Brazil Ham Page, carrying lots of DX info about PY operations.

www.coredcos.com/~mtw is a ham site run by Mike Witkowski, with monthly updates

of QSL info, etc.

Mike D'Alto, N3KFN, has a fantastic DX home page which contains a ton of DX related information/links at the URL address:
www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/1641

Herb, WA5YKO, reports the WEB's largest page relating to DX is located at:
www.dxer.org/

The World Wide Web Virtual Library Page for Amateur Radio has recently been updated. Features include: General Information, organizations, Clubs, Call-books, Callsign Search Engines, FTP Sites, Companies and Manufacturers, and more -at:
<http://www.meaning.com/pointers/wwwvl-ham.html>

The North Jersey DX Association is at:
www.intserv.com/~web/njdx

Those interested in linking to Clusters via Internet (the ultimate for those with cash to spare!) may be interested in the Telnet programme which, along with many other useful Windows utilities may be obtained from The Ultimate Collection of Winsock at:
www.tucows.com and

Top Band contest submissions may be viewed at:
www.contesting.com/_topband/

Those with a leaning (!) for towers and antenna systems may wish to "subscribe" to the Towertalk Reflector. Be forewarned, this place is not for the feint-hearted or the guy running the half-size G5RV. The US DXers on this reflector discuss how to use helicopters to raise their 20m beams! However, there's much good stuff about rotators and tower systems generally. Simply send "subscribe" as the message content to:
towertalk-request@akorn.net

The "NG3K Amateur Radio Contest/DX Page" is at URL:
cpcug.org:80/user/wfeidt/

Visit Veikko Komppa's site for details of li-

censing requirements in the majority of DXCC countries. Veikko has put a colossal amount of effort into this page and it will provide you with more information than your radio society:

www.clinet.fi/~jukka/license.html

Are you puzzled over a 4M prefix? Or a 6D? Need Latitude/Longitude for Somalia? In which zone is Afghanistan (ITU and CQ zones)?? For these answers and more (DXCC List) go to the following URL (which is part of the "NG3K Amateur Radio Contest/DX Page"):

cpcug.org:80/user/wfeidt/Dxcc/dxcc.html

You may be interested to learn about a new web-site "Ham Radio Latvia", which focuses on Amateur Radio in Latvia: licensing, call-sign system, repeaters, amateur privileges, the radio amateur examination, the national amateur organisation, etc.:

www.latnet.lv/HamRadio/HamRadio.htm

Since there are quite a number of reflectors, also known as Amateur Radio Related Mailing Lists, here is a WEBsite which will show you how to subscribe to them.:

www.cam.org/~dino/hamlists.html

So you can see, there is plenty on Internet to interest the average DXer - but remember, every QSO makes your telephone provider rub his hands. Hi!

FREE SOFTWARE

I0JX offers a set of Windows programs called ClusterMaster (ver. 4.20), RigMaster (ver. 5.03d) and RigMate (ver. 1.03e) which may be freely downloaded on Internet, with the following command:

<ftp://ftp.winsite.com/pub/pc/win3/misc/i0jx.zip>

These are full freeware programs, not shareware demos. They are intended for PacketCluster operations and for rig control (Kenwood, ICOM) via RS-232 interface. Automatic installation program is bundled. Neither will they pollute your hard disk, nor

will they modify WIN.INI or SYSTEM.INI (easy removal if you don't like them). They are 16-bit programs, but operate with Windows 95.

Main features include:

- separate PacketCluster windows for your own traffic, and for general traffic in monitor mode (be sure to properly set the TNC parameters, see help file);
- voice spelling of incoming DX spots (requires audio card, e.g. SoundBlaster);
- full two-way integration between PacketCluster and rig control, via Windows DDE;
- elaborated DXCC countries data base and personal records management. Alert sound for unconfirmed countries in the various bands/modes;
- automatic antenna pointing to DX country (requires Kansas City Tracker board, or equivalent);
- integrated access to BuckMaster HamCall CD-ROM (other CD-ROMs may also be managed in future program releases);
- automatic antenna SWR graphic plot (only for Kenwood rigs, based on internal SWR meter readings)
- automatic antenna gain graphic polar plot (only for Kenwood rigs, based on S-meter readings while you rotate your antenna on a steady beacon signal);
- sophisticated BC stations graphic data base for SWLs;
- comprehensive help files, and brief command summary file (both English and Italian);

Programs will operate on any reasonably equipped modern PC (386 and up). Two free serial ports (one for TNC, one for rig control) must be available to enjoy all programs features; this implies having three serial ports (the third one is for the mouse) working on different IRQs.

Once you have de-zipped file I0JX.ZIP, read the text file README.1ST (English).

Programs development started in 1993, so they should be now quite well debugged. They are free for radio amateurs use; no contributions are either required or accepted. See disclaimer in help files. Positive criticism and suggestions welcome at

i0jx@amsat.org.

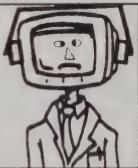
NEW MILLENNIUM PROBLEMS

See page 32 of the last issue. The URL contained a typo - sorry. This URL definitely worked on 12 September:

<http://rampages.onramp.net/~gtbecker/>

WAL E. HEAD

"Mummy, it says: XZIA
NO24 Q5X up. I sent him
a talk message to ask
him if it was raining but
he won't answer me..."



SMILEY

Absolutely *nothing* to do with amateur radio or DXing, but even those who do not use the Internet will likely have heard of Smiley - the strange symbols which people cook up to express emotions as they type on text-based screens. You know the thing - the

:-(

symbol, which indicates a joking statement (akin to our "Hi"). Then there's the Frowning Smiley :

:-)

to indicate that the user did not like the last statement, or is upset or depressed about something. So, keeping in mind all the characters available on a keyboard, try to decode this Smiley:

C=}>;{()*

Full marks if you guessed: "Mega-Smiley. A drunk, devilish chef with a toupee in an up-draft, a moustache and a double chin!"

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by Bob Whelan, G3PJT

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DX OPERATIONS

D68 ON LF 1996

Dieter Voss, DL3KDV

Hello all, we are safely back home. Sorry to everyone who did not work us and a big "sorry" for not being QRV from Mayotte.

We had a very nice QTH on the north of Grand Comoro right beside the sea with plenty of space for the antennas. First day we had to travel to Moroni to get our licences, which took us several hours of waiting and getting all the needed stamps and signatures together, but finally it was no problem and the officer was very helpful.

The first evening we were too tired to set up the lowband antennas, so we made only a few QSOs on 30m.

During the next day we installed our Inverted L/Vertical for 160/80m in front of our cottage about 40m from the sea (at high tide). At 2200z Mirko, D68ET, started on topband working Scandinavia and later Central EU. At 00z it was my turn, but there was a lot of QRN on the band. Signals were fading with deep and long QSB. The best signals were coming from Scandinavia (I didn't know that there were so many loud topband stations in SM). After a short while I noticed "ZZ" in the EU pile up.. VE1ZZ??? Hmm? "ZZ ?? pse agn k" .. "VE1ZZ VE1ZZ ur 449 449 de VE1ZZ." Oh yes , it was Jack, 599 on my end now. Who else but him could have been our first NA in the log?

Later that night (about 02z) I worked Jack on 80m and we decided to QSY to 160m. There he was also Q5 with deep QSB. I guess that night he had problems hearing us well.

Then suddenly the sun went up and all bands were dead. Yes all bands, no signals

on 40 or 80, which was a big surprise for us. So North America on 40 or 80 after our sunrise wouldn't work. With several mosquito bites in my feet I went to bed.

The high QRN level on 160 was a big problem and we could only hear the big guns. We got a feeling that there were many more stations in the mud but how to copy a complete callsign?

The QTH is fantastic for installing TX antennas, but for a Beverage we tried 50m of wire directed north north west and about 3m high. This worked during the coming nights much better for receiving. But no JA and no NA on the band.

Other surprises were that our antennas were too close together for running 2 stations at the same time and after some days one of our laptops stopped working. Meanwhile we tried hard to get a lift to FH. We were told not to go by sea because of the poor safety record. Last year 3 ships never arrived! Finally we got in contact with an English pilot who had a 9 seat aircraft and was offering lifts to the surrounding islands. On the first telephone contact he told me that a flight to FH and back would cost about \$2,650! It's 150 miles to FH and that's too much - we didn't want to buy the plane.

The next day he came for a short stop to our apartment with a different offer. We would install a short wave station for him and another business man in Moroni and for that and \$500 he would take us to FH and back a week later.

We were back in business, we thought. The evening before leaving D6 we received a phone call from the pilot saying: "Sorry guys, the French government in Mayotte refused us landing permission for the flight. It doesn't matter that we are EUs or we have

an aircraft from ZS. No, the only reason why not is that we are coming from D6."

That was it. We had to cancel our FH hotel reservation and to stay another week on D6.

So all antennas had to be set up again and this time we also installed an Inverted Vee Dipole right beside the sea, 18m high in the centre and going down to 3m at the ends. That cost us the rest of our coax cable so we had to run without the beverage during the last week.

The next night we had high tide at 00z and so there was water directly under the antenna. (Low tide means 4m less water and 100m more beach to north). Mirko was again QRV until 23z when I started my turn. The Inv. Vee worked well. (It was the night DJ8WL was hearing us 599). Short before 00z I heard Bill W0ZV very loud and it seemed like he had also good copy on me. We made it.. After him W3BGN showed up and so on..

The next night we had time, but no electric power, then our small amp had blown up. I didn't notice it during night-time. Because no one replied my CQ calls I went to bed frustrated.

The next day I saw the mess. Something around the input relay had blown up and stopped incoming power to the transistors. Well, what to do? I replaced a relay from our 80/160 switching box and soldered it over the old one. It looked funny but worked. On the other hand we had now no chance to use the Inv. L anymore.

All in all we made 174 topband QSOs:

One with JA: JE7RJS; Tired of calling and calling for JAs at 20z I asked him on 80m if he was QRV on 160m. He said "yes" and a minute later he had worked D6 as a new one for him. We heard no other JA after him. Was it CONDX or hadn't the topband season started in JA yet ?

North America: VE1ZZ, W0ZV, W3BGN, N4SU, W4DR, W1JZ, K1ZM

Oceania: 9M2AX, VK6VZ

The rest was Africa and EU.

A really good thing was using switched power supplies. We had no problems with the varying power voltage that has killed several PCs there.

One final story: In case of installing a short wave system for a company which offers boat trips, diving, water ski and so on we have good connections now for making a trip to one of the very rare DXCC Countries nearby. We were in an embassy to ask for landing permission for one of the islands and received an encouraging answer. We have all the necessary on D6 for going with up to 6 ops to an island. That means ship, generators and so on. If you are really interested in going with us may be next year write for more details.

Very 73 from D68XS,D68ET and D68DV

DXERS ARE WEIRDI

Paul Dunphy, VE1DX

We spend more time optimising our stations than anything else! We have miles of ground wire and ground mats (made from chicken wire) buried all around the yard. Not as 1/4 wave radials for verticals, but because we read somewhere that it will reduce sky noise and ground loss. We have every antenna optimised to get the lowest possible SWR and we fret and worry if the resonance point moves 50 KHz when it rains or snows! We won't use anything but RG-213 or better, even though RG-8U is just as good (but we are not 100% convinced!) And RG-11! Blasphemy unless we can get it to match our antenna better 'cos it's interacting with something that increases the impedance to a point where 75 ohm gives a better SWR than 52 ohm coax! If we can get our hands on hard-line or heliax, we use it. One of us

got a good buy on some one inch heliax. We used it to feed the 160 metre vertical. Really cuts down the line loss on 1.8 MHz. We read somewhere that hard-line doesn't help much below 50 MHz, but we feel better, anyhow!

We all have \$3000-\$5000 radios. They aren't good enough when they come from the factory. First off, we have to buy all the additional filters at \$250-\$400 a pop. We aren't satisfied with that, we then buy an outboard DSP unit - usually good for another \$500. We look for mods that will increase the output power or make the audio more aggressive. Then we discuss endlessly on 2-metres whether the new rigs with built in DSP units at the IF level are worth buying. As soon as one of us caves in and buys one, all the others will have their own in a week! Invest in companies that make HF transceivers with a built in DSP unit. We will be buying them. For sure.

Our transmit audio? Speech processor in all the time, hard over to the right. Of course. Most knobs are meant to be turned all the way to the right. Look at your rig if you don't believe this! Microphones - we grudgingly admit the one good thing CB OPs brought to HAM radio was the Astatic D-104! Yes sir! And an amplified D-104 too. It picks up all the background noise from the fans, etc. We find we are usually good for 30-40% of maximum output power in background noise alone. If not, we can adjust the mike gain on the base of the D-104 until it is. Make no compromises. Only a D-104 will do the job.

CW proficiency? You bet! We all can recognise our call at 40 WPM when it's 339 in heavy QRN - and send "R R TU DE VE1DX 5NN 73 SK" at 50 WPM. However, if someone wants to rag chew at 15 WPM, we suddenly develop deep QSB and heavy QRM. There might be something up the band that we need for a new one. We aren't going to sit here and waste time!

Amplifiers - no DXer would be without one! And no little 500 watt weakling, either. We run full legal power. Always. Even if the DX is 30 over! We dream of amps that will put out 5000 or 10000 watts, sketch out designs on scratch pads of prototypes with four or six 8877s. We wonder if the traps on that Yagi are really only good for 2000 watts. Does the local licensing authority really monitor output power? None of us want to find out, but we dream nonetheless! Maybe we could re-wind the traps with bigger wire?

For that matter, why are we using traps at all. We need monobanders! Invest in companies that sell monoband Yagis. If we haven't bought them yet, we will. You can bet on that. The only investment safer than antenna companies is those that build tall towers. High ones designed to carry a lot of weight and wind load. And we all will be buying more than one of these too. Why? Because if it didn't fall over in that big wind storm last winter, we didn't have enough antennas on it. We'll fix that this summer. Don't bother talking this over with your broker, just invest in towers!

160M QRM

Herb Asmussen, GOWAZ/OZ7SM

Several OZ hams are running a local net on 1837 LSB and are causing havoc when other DX'ers are trying to work long haul DX on CW. According to my information some of these 'troublemakers' are using x-tal controlled surplus marine radio transmitters!

I was a guest at the annual meeting of the Danish DX-Group in June this year and the above matter was heavily debated. OZ hams have tried practically every avenue to stop this traffic starting with reasoning, pleading, threatening and deliberate QRM-ing! It appears that the few hams who insist on operating LSB on 1837 have now chosen to be stubborn and be a nuisance! The chairman of the Danish DX-Group is considering an

approach the relevant minister but the authority equivalent to our RA does not appear willing to act!

A debate has taken place in the Danish magazine 'OZ' and the well known DXer Rag, OZ8RO, has participated. I would like to quote the latter part of his 'Letter to the Editor' from the August issue:

"One is being called by a foreign ham who asks why we in OZ cannot keep order in our own house, as OZ hams do not respect the band plans and they are causing problems all over Northern Europe. I explain as best I can that, according to Danish licence conditions, one is permitted to transmit telephony in the range 1830-1840 kHz. The reply is that is also the case in other countries, however one does not do that, as this would be in contravention with the hams own rules and regulations as well as the 'unwritten rules'. In my first contribution I presented several concrete proposals how OZ9ZI & Co. could arrange themselves so that 'we all can be accommodated'. He has not rejected these as not practicable.

Almost everybody has a VFO as well as the ability to work USB. It is no excuse to be 'crystal-controlled' with LSB on 160m if it has been pointed out to them what problems they create for other people. It must be 'dictatorship by minority' when a small group has been informed but do not respect the rules set by the national body elected by hams. This is just not being done!

This is my last word in this debate.

Rag, OZ8RO"

So far the translated quote from 'OZ'. I have my doubts whether the matter will be solved. It looks like a few people are pounding on their 'rights' and not using common sense, which would be to fit a VFO to their ancient equipment and move. Being an OZ myself, much to my chagrin, this is not ham spirit.

MANNERS?

In a message to "ALL" on the PacketCluster, G4CRY wrote:

There have been one or two letters in the radio press and a message or two on packet regarding the poor manners of European DX operators in a pile up. We are alleged to call all the time over the top of everyone else and to put out bad and distorted signals with too much power! Japan and USA are alleged to be better mannered. I spent an hour last evening - about 2200UTC - trying to work an RTTY DX station and the pile up was BAAAAAAD!! The trouble was, there was no direction from the operator. There were big gaps between QSO's and he was not easy to copy so there was no indication that he had finished. He seemed to be answering the loudest and most insistent so therefore he was encouraging this bad behavior! It has been said before that the quality of a pile up is an indication of the quality of the operator and I endorse that view.

I make this appeal to all expedition and DX operators. Please give us an indication of when you end a QSO - call QRZ or CQ a couple of times, even if there are many callers. This simple action makes it easier for everyone concerned. Also if you make rules like 'LISTEN UP' or 'CQ USA ONLY' then stick to them. It is worse than useless to name a specific country then take calls from elsewhere. I could name at least one prominent DX station I have heard doing this!

Finally, in dealing with Europe, please remember that there are many many countries here and so there are a great many languages. Some of us even use different alphabets. Could it be that, in the race to make as many QSO's as possible from your DX location, care and consideration go out the window?

So please relax guys, call QRZ or CQ at the end of each QSO and make some rules and stick to them.

XV7SW

Several people have sent me questions about my operation as XV7SW from Hanoi, Vietnam., so here we go:

WHEN QRV AGAIN? I have been on leave in Sweden but should be QRV again as you read this.

LOW BAND ACTIVITY? I am a low band fan, so this winter I will give priority to 160, 80 and 40m. My antennas for 160 and 80 meters came down in a hurricane recently, but I expect to be able to put them up again without any problems. Besides heavy QRN most of the year, man-made noise is my main headache, since I am located in the middle of Hanoi.

SKEDS? Due to my workload, I find it difficult to run skeds; my own schedule is somewhat unpredictable at times. Because of the time difference with Sweden, I often work late, which dampens my enthusiasm for sunrise hobbies now and then.

RIG? Drake TR-7 + RV-7, Trio TL-922 Linear, kW on all bands.

ANTENNAS? Log-Periodic for 13-30 MHz, 24 meters up. 40m Inverted Vee. 80m GP with 4 elevated radials. 160m: Inverted L with 3 elevated radials.

FREQUENCIES, BANDS? I am restricted to operating only on certain fixed frequencies (for which I pay a considerable annual fee). My CW Freqs are: 1827, 3506, 7007, 14016, 14021, 21016, 21019, 28016 and 28019 kHz. It is always appreciated if you don't call zero beat. I cannot operate WARC bands and I do not own a microphone (spelling correct?).

QSL CARDS? My address is: Rolf T Salme, Embassy of Sweden, Box 9. Hanoi, VIETNAM. \$US1 is sufficient for mailing up to 2 cards in an envelope. Kindly note that Vietnamese stamps are of rather low denominations and quite big, so please leave

plenty of space on your return envelope. PLEASE use reasonably fresh \$US bills, since the banks do not accept crumpled or dirty bills. Pilfering happens, but not very often. A batch of envelopes I mailed in September 95 seems to have disappeared altogether; I have since changed to another post office. I also have a QSL manager in Sweden, Joe, SM3CXS. We both have the DXBase Log program, courtesy W8ZF, and I send my QSO file to Joe about once a month. Buro cards should be sent to SM3CXS, since there is no buro in Vietnam.

STATIONS QRV FROM VIETNAM? To my knowledge, there are now 5 licensed stations: 3W5FM, 3W5RS, 3W6AR, XV7SW and XV7TH. XV1A is a pirate, most probably far from Vietnam.

LICENSING? Amateur radio in the sense we know it does not exist in Vietnam and the above licensees should be seen as exceptions, pending the introduction of a fresh set of Regulations for Amateur Radio. A draft has been ready for some years but is still on ice. The licensing authority is the Directorate General of Posts and Telecommunications, the DGPT, which merely deals with the technical aspects of an application. There are other authorities involved as well. I am afraid that I cannot influence any of their decisions. The DGPT has a positive view on amateur radio. For example, they took very quick action and removed the station VRQ from the 14 MHz amateur band as soon as I brought this problem to their attention. If VRQ reappears, please let me know.

De Rolf SM5MX, XV7SW

IOTA AS-072

CDXC President Don Beattie will be QRV as 9M2/G3OZF from 7-10 November. Don will operate SSB and CW on 10-80m, depending on conditions. QSL to G3OZF.

XV NEIGHBOUR PROBLEMS

Torsten XV7TH is still in Hanoi. Unfortunately, some enterprising neighbour has sown off the elements of his TH5 on one side of the boom, so Torsten is QRT at present.

(Ed: Reminds me of when I worked overseas some years back. A new ILS localiser disappeared two days after it was installed. Later that week some "special TV aerials" were available at the local market..)

VE PREFIXES

On 13 September 1996, Industry Canada authorised all Canadian Amateurs to use special prefixes to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). From 0000 UTC 26 October until 2359 29 December 1996, Canadian Amateurs may use the following special prefixes in place of their regular prefixes:

VA2=XM2	VE4=XL4	VO1=XO3
VA3=CJ3	VE5=XM5	VO2=CZ6
VA7=VX7	VE6=VA6	VY1=CK5
VE1=CG1	VE7=XK7	VY2=XN2
VE2=CI2	VE8=CH8	
VE3=CI3	VE9=VB9	

MYANMAR

Laurie Margolis, G3UML, wrote the following to KF7AY:

I've just been reading the Myanmar stuff on your homepage and really have to wonder whether you are comfortable with the respectful, almost adulatory treatment you give the Myanmar goverment, SLORC.

By common consent this is one of the most disgusting totalitarian regimes left in the world. In particular, it has been very widely reported that the tourism campaign, which you feature, is largely fuelled by slave labour. Your State Department are, I think, pretty strong about Myanmar.

No doubt you read the recent piece in that

radical periodical National Geographic. This is a damn awful country which we should handle at arm's length, and there's no place in amateur radio for the boot-licking stuff in your homepage.

I'm not fundamentalist about this -- I hope your expedition is a huge success, and I'll be in the pileups. I see no reason why we shouldn't try to operate from places like Myanmar. The more daylight that enters such a dark nation, the better. I've known OH2BH for years and have the highest regard for all he's done.

But I am profoundly uneasy when we find ourselves buttering up a disgusting regime in order to ingratiate ourselves. It's unacceptable, and amateur radio should retain its dignity. Best wishes and 73,

Laurie Margolis, G3UML (HR since 1976)

T8 - NEW PREFIX

In 1994, Belau (Palau) declared its independence from the USA. Consequently, the KC6 prefix needed to be replaced by a new unassigned prefix. The prefix T8 has been assigned to Belau. Oklahoma DX Assoc members N5OK and N5CG have now activated the T8 prefix for the first time as T88T. They will be using this call in both of the CQWW Contests.

MR MEXICO!



Luis, XE1L with Bren and XYL Ruth in the G4DYQ shack just prior to the historic 3Y0PI DXpedition.

QRZ CONTEST

Ken Chandler, GOORH

Welcome to the Contest section of CDXC Newsletter. I am not able to report on anything for this issue as I've been away for the past month or so, not all pleasure I hasten to add but I'm afraid work in this case does take a preference!. There are a few points which I will bring up. Firstly, I know it's a long way off, but I'm reminding you early about the BERU, i.e. the Commonwealth Contest. Next year 8-9 March 1997, is the 60th Anniversary of this time honoured contest in the RSGB calendar. If you look carefully at the rules in the September 96 RadCom contest supplement, you will notice that the RSGB HF contest committee (HFCC) has made provision for a restricted section. This has been done to help through the somewhat tedious hours of calling with nobody returning to your "CQ contest" calls, as tends to happen during this contest -due mainly to poor propagation, and advertising, the latter I will mention later. Just ask any hardened BERU contest!

We hope that the 12hrs restricted section will prove productive and, hopefully, bring back the stations which once were heard during this contest and, most importantly, bring new contestants together with old, for a truly glorious event. I mentioned advertising; to make any event such as the BERU contest attractive it must have adequate advertising, not just from RadCom, or QST publications. It must come from ourselves, the very people who give up their weekends and who spend weeks planning ahead for the event. We can make a big effort for 97 BERU by asking every commonwealth Country that we work to make a note, and put in an appearance. If only for a couple of hours at least that could generate enough interest. So how about it?

Put the word about now. Make a note now in your diaries for March 8/9 97, have a go and enjoy yourself.

Secondly, on the subject of BERU, CDXC member and well-known contestor / DXer Bob Whelan G3PJT, has produced a book REFLECTIONS IN A ROSEBOWL, a history of BERU and the Commonwealth contest from 1931-1996. This has been well put together, and contains much documentary evidence which has been well researched, and contains 80 odd photographs and past and present tactics for winning the BERU. At £15 + £1.25p pp, it's surly a must for every contestants shack. But hurry, they are limited, only 250 copies will be printed, you have been warned !.

Commonwealth Contest 1996.

Congratulations to CDXC Members Bob Whelan, G3PJT (ZF1JT), 2nd place and the Junior Rose Bowl, and Dave Lawley, G4BUO, in his excellent 4th place and who retains the Col Thomas Rose Bowl for his spirited effort in the Commonwealth Contest 1996. (You're getting closer Dave!). Well done Bob, Dave.

Other CDXC members who participated were: Jan Fisher, G0IVZ 7th, Brian Coyne, G4ODV 12th, Andy Chadwick, G4ZVJ 14th, Mike Foster, GW3HGJ 34th, Ken Chandler, GOORH 37th, Hal Mee, G5MY 41st, John St Leger, G3VDL 56th, David Newton, G3JJZ 64th, Mike Mason, G4OTY 85th. There were 85 registered entrants, which was well up on the previous year of 65 entries. Including the single band entries total 102 entries.

K1AR MOVES ON

John Dorr, K1AR

There are times in our personal lives when opportunities that are simply too good to pass up present themselves. Such an occurrence has happened to me in recent days. Effective September 16th, I will be joining Ce-

rulean Technology in Marlborough, MA with the responsibility of directing Product Marketing for the company.

The opportunity at Cerulean meets several needs for our family. Not only does it afford us the opportunity to return to our geographic roots in New England, but it also enables me to return technologically as well. While my tenure at CQ has been extremely rewarding, my fundamental interests and background have always been with high technology.

A change such as this may create some questions in your mind. For those who are interested, I intend to continue my role as CQ Contest Column editor. In addition, my departure from CQ will have no impact on the future viability of CQ Contest magazine. That future will be, as it always has been, driven by your support and desire to continue to subscribe.

Finally, I can only say the highest words of praise for CQ. Professionally, the past four years have been some of the best I have ever enjoyed. On a personal level, one could not find a better group of people to work with, beginning with CQ's publisher, Dick Ross, K2MGA. I wish them all the success in the future.

CQWW CW 1995 RESULTS

Pete Grillo, AH3C

Very nice summary in October CQ, indeed! Interesting to note the score reductions in the top ten summaries from the claimed scores gathered on the Reflector. The upcoming CQ Contest article summary should be enlightening.

Perhaps a comment on the tight Caribbean race is worth mentioning, with John (K4BAI) squeaking ahead of Glenn (K6NA) and Wayne (N7NG).

It appears at first glance that two of the top ten DX single op scores had about 5% de-

ducted (mine being one of them). There may have been an impact on standing, particularly with the Caribbean scores. It is amazing to me that Ville (OH2MM), Jose (CT1BOH), John (K4BAI), and Glenn (K6NA) consistently come out with less than 1% deducted. Oliver (W6NV) should also be mentioned here, and many others too difficult to identify in the pack (DX side) based on the initial CQ write-up.

I did note, however, that a digit was missing on my 80 meter QSO total in the breakdown (was that 650 instead of 50)? Also, even though our club (SCCC) won the club competition, is there a reason my score was not included in the tally? I thought it was clear that I was a member of the SCCC and had declared this in my log summary. This would make our team total 34,108,292 instead of 26,697,434.

Much has been devoted in the CQ Contest articles about accuracy and efficiency in making QSO's to avoid the "uniques". One aspect I would like to see is some discussion about computer logging efficiency. Being on the DX end presents different problems than being on the domestic US end. Having been on the DX end for the past 9 years, I would like to point out some new problems...

First, is accuracy in typing. Perhaps over 95% of the QSO's logged from a DXpedition site are from answered CQ's (that other 5% is for quickly working multipliers in search and pounce mode while sweeping the bands). When a typing mistake in the call is made by the operator, it depends a lot as to how the configuration for the QSO is set up. Many of us are using Tree's TR program. This program is so efficient that the entire exchange can be completely logged simply by typing in the callsign. This is done by using the "Auto Call Terminate" function. In the 1992 and 1995 contests I had the cursor set at the 4th letter because my typing speed is typically about 2 letters behind

hearing the calling station's call sign when our speed is >30 WPM (typically 32-35 WPM). With CT, two letters behind causes a major "pregnant pause" if you have to continue typing before hitting the "enter" key. This causes confusion if the DX operator is too slow in typing and the calling station decides to call again, since the pregnant pause was enough to create the question, "did he come back to me?", by the calling station. If he does call again, the DX station may be transmitting at the same time, thus causing neither to be able to respond. At this point it takes at least twice the time to complete an exchange.

The key to successfully using the "auto-call-terminate" technique is to train yourself to MAKE SURE YOU HEAR THE ENTIRE CALL OF THE CALLING STATION before hitting the 4th letter of the call. Before the big contest I sit down for and hour or two at least twice a week for a month or so and practice making QSO's using the "auto-call-terminate" feature and also using my 19,000 call sign database (captured from all the confirmed QSL cards of 1990). This hones my response time for being as accurate as possible in copying the entire call. Tree's practice program is another example of his forward thinking. If you make an error in copying the call he has a routine message that requires you to repair your error. The rate meter immediately reflects this and causes you to work harder to get the call right the first time. By the time I am ready for the contest I feel confident enough to use the "auto-call-terminate" feature. Unfortunately, this feature can also work against you!!!! You MUST hear the ENTIRE call. If the calling station sends his call in error...then the usual problem of repeats will undoubtedly occur. This is not the worst problem. What can really destroy a great effort is when you start getting really tired during the fracas. The mind cannot keep up with the computer's precise command and control capability! I was able to analyse the results of my operations and found several

instances where I had cut off a letter or a character of a letter by typing the fourth letter just a fraction ahead of hearing the entire call. This happens because the program is allowing you to type without sending until you type the fourth letter...then all of a sudden the computer starts sending at the same time that the calling station is just finishing sending the rest of his call!

There are at least 50 occasions in my log at C4A that created an incorrect call sign because of this problem. There were many instances during the operating that I was alert enough to catch myself not hearing the entire call, then requiring a repeat.

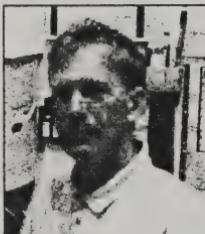
The bottom line of all this? The "uniques" filtering process initiated by the CQWW committee has my full support! Through your diligent screening process, the computer program that filters uniques from logs has caused me to dig deep into my skill level to find out what is really wrong with some of my operating. I commend all of you for making the CQWW DX contests the true test of operating skill!

Thanks for the hundreds (and probably thousands) of hours contributed by each member of the committee. Your efforts are an example of matching leading edge technology toward a betterment of Amateur Radio Contesting!

GB5SI (SHETLAND IS 1995)

THE EXPEDITION THAT NEVER WAS!

Brian Devlin, GM0EGI



It started one wet April evening when the bands were flat and the mood was low. On our regular club night, I suggested that we should take part in the CQWW SSB

Contest, as our Club had not taken part since 1989. This was greeted with some enthusiasm by the dozen or so Club members in and around our HF Shack. I then dropped the bombshell - let's do it from the Shetlands. The faces dropped - What? The Shetlands in October? Immediately the number of interested parties dropped to about six.

I had been thinking about going to the Shetlands for some time, so I said that I would make some enquiries and report back to anyone who wanted to go. The six interested ops, said they would all go, so I visited the Travel Agents and got details of accommodation and ferry prices.

I found a holiday company who hired our holiday chalets and I enquired about the possibility of hiring one from 26 October until 2 November. I explained in my letter why we were going and would it be possible to rent a chalet next to a field or open ground as we would need space for the antennas. The owner wrote back within a few days confirming that I could hire a chalet and there was space for antennas but was this radio operation legal?

I duly sent off the deposit and assured him that all was legal. After the accommodation was booked, I applied for the special event call GB5SI, which I received. The next thing to arrange was transport.

I informed the Club members who said they were going that I would need to book the ferry and that I would require a non-returnable deposit of £150 within the next two weeks. Then the problems started; one by one operators dropped out until there were only three of us left who would go. I had to make a decision - could three of us put up the antennas and operate for 48 hours on a shift basis? Furthermore, financially, the cost had soared. The cost of the expedition would have to be covered by three operators instead of seven. I, sadly, decided to cancel and cut my losses (apologies to anyone who

was looking for GB5SI, but the call was not activated this year).

I had made all the preparations for our multi op entry and was quietly confident of doing well but when the ops started to drop out and I had to cancel our trip I was not sure that I could handle the contest on my own.

This left me with the question what will I do? I had operated in 1989 as part of a multi op single tx group and had helped with some special event stations, but I had never done any serious operations as a single operator. I decided to go for it - Single Op, High Power All Band. Then the re-organising started. I was going to CT land for a family holiday in late September and would not be back in Scotland until mid October, which would give me two weeks to organise everything.

The two weeks before the contest were taken up with band planning, propagation predictions, when to QSY, should I go for multipliers (hunt & pounce), should I find a clear spot and call CQ? I also needed an antenna for 80m, so an 80m dipole was made and put up, not ideal, but it would do, I hoped. No space for a top band antenna, so I could only work five bands, my linear didn't work on 10m, so I was restricted to 100 watts. Still these things are sent to try us. Next on the agenda was the paperwork. Separate zone sheets for each band, countries required for 5BDXCC (might as well kill two birds with one stone) should I use paper logs or computer logs, get the rules re-read and copy all application forms.

During this time my XYL realised that I was taking this contest seriously. I had told her that all my spare time was going to be taken up with the planning and operating for the contest and that any other business would have to wait until the 30th October.

My XYL had not been feeling too well in the weeks before the contest and as we had a three year old daughter, Claire, who was at that age of getting into everything, I decided

to call my mother and ask her if she would like the company of her favourite granddaughter for a few days around end of October. This also meant that my XYL could keep me supplied with food and drink throughout the weekend of the contest - talk about being selfish!

Everything was now arranged, and that is why at 2350 GMT on October 27th, I was sitting in my own shack ready to activate GM0EGI instead of sitting in the Shetlands with GB5SI in front of me.

Over the weekend I operated for about 40 hours over the five bands available to me and my scores were as follows:

BAND	QSO'S	ZONES	COUNTRIES	SCORE
3.5	68	4	24	1,904
7	18	5	13	360
14	369	21	75	64,608
21	524	27	82	117,284
28	114	8	19	3,672

My total score was 548,494 points with a total of 1093 QSO's. My aim for the contest was to score 500,000 points or more and try for more than 1,000 QSO.

I succeeded in my targets

My equipment was JST135 by Japan Radio Co, Ameritron AL84 Linear, KLM KT-34 4-el tri-band beam for 10, 15 and 20m at 50 ft AGL, Full size G5RV in Inverted V configuration with the apex at 50 ft, and an 80m dipole fitted into the garden. I used the logging program Log-EQF.

Conclusion - I should have tried harder on 40m but the band was very noisy at my QTH and I missed the 10m opening on the Saturday. All in all I was very pleased with my first attempt at single op contesting.

On the Monday after the contest, my XYL informed me she was pregnant. She didn't tell me before the contest in case it affected my score. On 3 June, 1996 daughter No. 2

arrived. I wonder if my mother would like both of her favourite grand-daughters to stay for a few days around the last weekend in October?

ALL ASIA SSB - FROM THE "OTHER SIDE"

Fred Laun, K3ZO/HS0ZAR

During my stay in Thailand this year I obtained permission to use the Radio Amateur Society of Thailand's club station for the All Asia SSB DX Contest using my personal call HS0ZAR. Though conditions at this point in the sunspot cycle are bad all over, I knew that April and September are the best months for propagation "over the pole" from the East Coast to Thailand.

Club station manager HS1CHB picked me up on Friday night and took me to the club station site, located on the campus of the Asian Institute of Technology about 10 miles north of Bangkok airport. The contest begins at 0700 Saturday morning Thailand time so I played around on 40 CW at sunset Friday night hoping to give a few of the needy Zone 26 on 40. Conditions were not all that good however and I only dragged the big stations, K1MEM, N4AR and a couple of others through the rainy season's QRN. Plenty of JA's got through, however.

At 0000 GMT I was ready to go on 20 SSB with the 80-foot-high TH7DXX over the North Pole but after one CQ brought a WA2 there weren't many other answers. And what there were were JA's who didn't realise that HS is part of Asia. Guess the USA gang didn't realise the band was open. I looked around 20 and found just a few non-Asians running JA's - KH0/JH1UUT, DUISAN, VK9XB - and though it was no problem to break through the piles, things went pretty slow. None of the bands were open to Europe yet. A look at 15 found three VK's knocking them off, nothing else. At around 0145 GMT the South Americans

- ZP, LU, CP - began to come through on 15. But they were few and far between and I created a non-contest pile-up of JA's just to keep myself amused. Every now and then a South American would break through and I could coax a number from him. At 0400 I only had 16 contest QSO's and then things picked up a bit as UA4's started coming in on 15 and 20.

Finally at 0700 with 40 QSO's in the log enough of Europe was in daylight so that I got my first run going on 15. The band dropped out at 0740 and came back again about 0820. This time the run was for real and continued for hours, but Bangkok's daily rainy-season afternoon series of thunderstorms made me QRT every now and then when lightning flashes got too close. Almost all the callers were Europeans but the occasional 5Z4, Z28 or S79 would call in. Also Asians who were not aware I could not work them for points. How many times in a single contest have you had to tell three different S21's that, sorry, you were not allowed to work them in the contest? Since I was paper-logging it was not hard to log the Asians anyhow in case any of them needed an HS QSL. I knocked out the contest log later on my sister-in-law's computer back at the house.

At about 1100 GMT I realised that 20 was getting ready to open to the East Coast but the run of Europeans on 15 didn't let up and everyone was telling me I was the loudest thing on that band so I decided to hang in there until 15 closed. Finally at 1307 the band closed with 356 QSO's in the log, the last being SM4GNU. At around 1200 I got mad for the only time in the contest when 9A3NQ called me, gave me a long song-and-dance about how he wasn't in the contest, hated contests, and asked for my name and QSL information. It gave me great pleasure at that point to indicate that I had clearly called "CQ contest" and that if he wasn't in the contest he should not have called me; I then coined a phrase: "No con-

test number, no QSL" and he quickly got the point. After saying "Oh boy" a couple of times he came across with a number.

The minute I got on 20 E21CJN across town informed me that he had been running the East Coast and South America solid there for two hours. I went to work there at 1330 with W9HRQ and even though K4MZU and W4MWT were booming in as usual I had obviously missed the best part of the East Coast opening and outside of a few Midwest QSO's what was coming in now was Europe. I ran mostly Europeans until about 1500 when 20 closed abruptly with my QSO total standing at about 450.

What was left was 40 meters which was a mess. By this time the European SSB Field Day had begun and local QRM in Europe kept all but the best-equipped Europeans from hearing me, and even with an inverted Vee with the apex at about 70 feet on my end, it was S&P all night long with meagre results. Besides, I couldn't hear very well either with the loud Iranian broadcast station on 7070, being jammed by the Iraqis, with audio cranked up to overcome the jamming creating parasitics on audio peaks which spread out all over the band. Another BC/jamming combination on 7105 wasn't doing much good for the portion of the band between 7080 and 7100 either. The JA's weren't having much luck either; I only heard JA8NFV, who I believe has a 3-el monobander on 40, running stations with regularity.

Finally at 2000 the bothersome BC stations went off and at the same time a few LU's showed up on the band working the contest; they were comparatively easy to work, as was the odd African that came on. At 2345 20 finally opened with WA2VUY and beginning 0015, with a grand total of 475 QSO's to show for the first half of the contest, I was able to run the East Coast pretty well. A lot of people had obviously learned about the contest since the night before! At

0130 GMT with 524 QSOs in my log the opening ended. I might add that I was not running at full blast the whole time since I felt compelled to have a few words with many of my friends who called, conditions being so good. What was left after the East Coast dropped out were a few locals like a V63 and some YB's, so I decided to have a little shut-eye while waiting for the European opening on 15.

At about that time one of Thailand's eager young contestants, 18-year-old E21LLR, showed up at the station, so I let him operate until 0900 when I took over again. He wasn't going to send in a contest log anyhow so he was happy to give the unsuspecting JA's and HL's who called a contest number, and later knocked off a number of stations in Europe and the Middle East before I got on again.

At 0920 I began running Europe on 15 with 535 QSO's now in the log. Conditions today were not all that great to Europe, however, and at 1100, having only increased my QSO total to 555, I switched to 20 to catch the beginning of the East Coast opening. The first to answer my CQ was FT5WE! (I had also worked FT5WF earlier). It's an easy shot from Thailand. I was surprised from the ages given that both of these guys are in their early 20's.

It took until 1122 for the first USA to come through, K2QBV. About 1205 I finally found a frequency that worked and then the pile began to form. By 1300 I was up to 629 QSO's, almost all those in the last two hours being from the USA, with the W4's predominating. It was great to have one of my mentors and gurus, Ed, W3AU, call in. At 1402 I was called by myself, as Rana, WB4NFO, went over to my QTH so I could hear how the K3ZO signal sounded. By then it seemed I had worked just about all of my DX'er/tester neighbours and about half of the PVRC members. At 1421, with 705 QSO's in the log, I worked my last W in

the opening, as the band shifted to Europe.

From then until 1455 the European pile-up continued briskly and then the Europeans abruptly dropped out, leaving V51E calling me all alone. He said he had been calling for several minutes trying to get me through the pile with my beam on Europe. After a couple more African QSO's 20 went completely dead at 1504 and I went to 40 with 748 QSO's in the log. 40 being in its usual sad state, after one QSO with a YB I went to bed. At 1900 I was back on the band and in an hour of S&P I added 10 QSO's to the log -- all Europeans that I had called in vain the night before when the European Field Day had been on. By 2200 I had added eight more CE's and LU's to the log and was up to a QSO total of 769.

With nothing else happening, I listened to the Philippine Net begin on 7045 at 2230 GMT and monitored for a while. There are a lot more DU's on the air than you think! When things got slow for them I called in and managed a couple more numbers from DU stations. At 23:30 20 opened with K6DR answering my CQ.

No East Coast on this opening today, so I ended the last half hour of the contest with QSO's from DU1, VE7, C21 and KC6, and ended the contest with a grand total of 776 QSO's. Fifteen and twenty were almost a dead heat with just over 350 QSO's each, and forty brought up the rear with around 40 QSO's. E21CJN, who had stayed mostly on 20, reported 390 QSO's with the USA alone and was quite pleased with that. The great bulk of them were W4's, he added.

I recall doing an All Asian Phone DX Contest from HS1ABD in 1979, ending up at that time with about 1100 QSO's, so the difference between high and low sunspot years must be about 350 QSO's. Anyway, it was interesting to see how things work out from the other side of the world.

CONFESIONS OF A SPRINT FIRST-TIMER

Scott Robbins KY2P

I've been contesting now for 15 years, and I have never entered a Sprint contest before, except for two occasions several years back where I handed out a few Q's. Why? I really couldn't say - mostly because I didn't see it as being serious due to the length, etc. I had nothing whatsoever to back this up other than just sheer ignorance.

I had decided a week beforehand I was going to get on and hand out a few Q's during the CW Sprint contest. I am teaching myself two-radio contesting, and figured this would be an ideal situation to get a little practice time in. Friday morning, inspiration struck while reading the rules to the contest - gee, only three bands...I could get some antennas up on Saturday and actually do the whole thing and try to compete....

7:30 AM Saturday morning. I just moved two months ago, and my antenna "farm" consists of two dipoles, both 10 feet off the ground hastily erected to get on for the NAQP CW contest. That's simply not going to do. It'll be easy to get a couple of antennas up this morning and then I'll have the rest of the day to.....

6:00 PM Saturday - after a trip to Home Depot, and several trips up onto the second story roof with no lunch break, I managed to come up with a dipole at 30 feet for 80m (NE/SW), a dipole at 20 feet for 40m (NE/SW), and a duct-taped 14AVQ vertical, which is now ground mounted using the infamous cinder-block and big tree method favoured by Field Day slackers everywhere. I have enough wire left for two radials on 20m for the vertical.

7:45 PM Saturday - I've got both radios, keyers and paddles hooked up and ready to go. The extension cords are all set up - my shack in my new house is in a finished at-

tic...finished with everything except electricity.

A 50 foot orange electrical cord runs down the staircase to the dining room. I've got two power supplies, the pencil sharpener, my vintage 1979 Autek keyer, and a 60 watt bulb on a power strip. Everything is working great. I can hear W6 and W7 on the trap vertical on 20, so I decide to start by calling CQ on 40 and S&P with the second radio on 20. Texas is very loud on 20!

My laptop computer bit the dust in July and is now fixed - but I don't have the correct software for the Sprint contest. Out comes the old blue lined school notebook, as I am unable to locate any old SS log sheets.

Sheesh....

I start the contest on 40 and rack up some quick contacts, and don't even listen to the second radio on 20 until about 10 minutes into the contest. 20 sounds good, but after calling a few stations it's become quickly obvious that on the vertical, anyone I am not hearing at least S7 is not hearing me, and soliciting contacts on 20 is going to be impossible. I have the memory keyer pounding CQ on 40 and am tuning on 20 - there is no interference between the two even though the antennas are only 50 feet apart. I also have realised that it's going to take a little while to figure out what strategy I want to use to maximise the rate. During the first hour, I distinctly feel like the second radio is slowing me down a little. This turns out to not be true now that I look over the log. What's really slowing me down is no one hears me on 20 !!

Second hour: I have ascertained that the best way to keep up the rate is to S&P with both rigs at the same time. Calling CQ on the vertical on 20 is going nowhere. The rate does start to pick up a little. I can hear loud signals rolling off healthy numbers on 20 - but there is so much activity there that each solicitation gets two or three callers. Can't

get through that. At 0130, I start flipping the 20 rig down to 80. I decided beforehand to leave one rig on 40 for the whole contest and switch between 20 and 80 with the other one. I figured it was unlikely I'd need to be on 20 and 80 at the same time and that turned out to be correct. There is NOBODY on 80. I hear the first signal there around 0200. I figure it's a chicken and egg thing there - 40 is going well and 20 is still open...40 started to go very well at 0130Z, so I put the second rig on 3540 with the filters on 2.4 kHz to see if anything pops up there...first Q comes in at 0213, followed by a few quick more and after a few minutes the floodgates are open. By this time I'm hearing almost nothing on 20 except some real weak west coast that aren't hearing me anyway. Q total after two hours = 99.

Third hour: I only have one memory keyer, and it's on the 40 meter radio, which is now only S&Ping. I'm sending everything on 80 by hand, but I don't want to stop to unplug and switch the keyers. No one seems weak on 80 - even the west coast is very audible by 0300z. If I have to repeat "TN" one more time I'm going to bite off the end of this pencil - Oh vanity calls!, bring me a nice one with a "4", so I can put an end to eight years of out-of-call district contesting and everyone will copy my section right the first time.

Fourth hour: I have 149 Q's after three hours, and 200 Q's looks possible if the rate keeps the same. I have started calling CQ again on 40 while tuning on 80, because the 80 rate has slowed just enough to copy two signals again at the same time. A lesson learned here: Got to figure out how to run a substantial rate on one rig and tune around with the other. When the rate meter gets higher, it gets harder to listen to the other one. Obviously this is no earth shattering news - but this is the first year I've tried this two-radio bit. The first half-hour is going well, and with 20 minutes to go, it looks like I'll make it to 200...but it drops off. I end up

with only 12 Q's for the last 20 minutes and fall 4 short. Total Q count - 196.

Postcontest: Tune to what turns out to be 3832.35 or so and listen. I didn't keep a mult sheet so I am counting multipliers and come up with 40. The scores are coming in, and except for NM5M, it looks like my mults are right in there and I'm only about 15 Q's behind most of the low power entries. 196/40 final. For using low wire antennas and a ground mount vertical and no computer, it didn't turn out too bad! If I'd had a better antenna on 20, I would have been able to work much more up there. Easily could have made up most of that in the first hour on 20 calling stations that were not hearing me.

What I learned: Two radios are hard, but it's getting easier all the time and I'm glad I resisted the impulse to turn the volume down on one of them. My knee-jerk reaction for what it takes to compete in the Sprint CW contest is 1) don't tune around as fast as you do in other contests and 2) LISTEN TO CALLSIGNS. I'm sure I missed contacts because I was too impatient to wait through the whole exchange; I could have gotten what I needed out of it by listening to the callsigns and ignoring the rest of what was sent. This is a terrific contest and I am sorry I spent so many years totally ignoring it.

I operated serious single op for the WPX CW and IARU HF this year and I had more fun with this one by far than either one of those. I'll be back - permanently. I might even plug in a microphone and get on for the SSB contest - unheard of in these parts...

Dave, G4BUO writes: *"I was with G3GRS/P in SSB field day recently but when I should have been looking for mults I spent a little time listening to the North American CW sprint. At the end of the four hours some were sending serial numbers above 300. Not bad considering you have to keep QSYing! In the NA sprint, those of us outside north America can work Americans for points."*

MY WIFE THINKS I'M NUTS

Larry Reader, KE2VB

My contest station on St. Croix had sustained some damage from hurricane Bertha. The tower had folded, flipping the antenna and rotor upside down. After the hurricane Lorrin, the owner of Windwood, (the house where the station is located) and I had decided that I would come down to do the needed repair work in September. Since this was to be strictly a "work and contest trip" (I figured I might as well do the WAE SSB while I was down) I didn't invite my XYL Bev to come along. After all, I figured, I wasn't going down for a vacation! She was not pleased.

I was supposed to leave for STX on Tuesday, September 10th, but hurricane Hortense got in the way, in more ways than one, as I later discovered. I delayed my departure until Thursday to avoid the storm. Bev drove me to the airport early Thursday morning; there wasn't a lot of conversation during the drive. Got to the airport, unloaded and had a skycap take my luggage to the ticket counter. He took off, I ran after him, Bev drove off, with my tickets still on the back seat of the car! The car phone was turned off. By the time Bev got home and I was able to speak with her it just wasn't possible to drive back to the airport before my flight took off. The airline folks were more than nice and rebooked me, after charging my credit card for another \$600. Said I could get a refund when I brought back the original tickets. However, since I was flying on a free ticket, my refund will be in the form of another free ticket! Wonder if Amex will except a free ticket as payment of my monthly bill? Probably not.

Got to San Juan around 2:30 pm. No power in the airport, 90 degrees, 100% humidity, no power, no air conditioning. Airport is chaos, remember, PR had been declared a disaster area after receiving 15 inches of rain from Hortense. I finally got on a plane to

STX and arrived at 5:30 pm, Lorrin was there to meet me.

No luggage. No way to trace the luggage, no power at San Juan. So there I was, for two days, without clothes, tools, climbing belt, repair parts, computer for the contest, etc. They finally found my luggage, sitting in San Juan, and got it to the St. Croix airport on Friday evening.

All day Friday we worked to get the station operational. I hate working without proper tools. Lorrin is 82 years old and the tools he had, pliers, screwdriver, coping saw, etc. looked like he had received them as Christmas presents when he was a child. With the help of the two guys Lorrin had hired to help me, we managed to get the antenna down and the tower lowered. The antenna had taken much more of a beating than I had thought, it was a total loss. The rotor had been flipped upside down by Bertha so the drain hole in the case was right side up. 15 inches of rain had poured in, it was junk too. Managed to convert the remains of the 40 ft tower to a reasonably stable 30 ft tower by remounting the thrust bearing and installing a new rotor plate after discarding the top 10 ft of twisted aluminium. Remember now, I'm still in my "travel" clothes, not even a hat to keep the sun off. By the time we were done I was completely soaked through with sweat.

At 5 pm we got the word my luggage had been found and was at the airport. We quickly erected Windwood's "backup" antennas, an A3 on a 10 ft mast and dipoles for 40 and 80 hung from the tower (couldn't hang the A3 on the tower since, without a rotor, the mast was unstable. Doesn't matter anyway, antenna height is irrelevant if you're already perched on the edge of a 900 ft cliff). Ran to the airport and retrieved the luggage, finally changed. Bought a pizza on the way back to sustain me through the contest. Set up the station and waited for the 8pm local time contest start. I was already

completely beat.

The contest was a blast. Windwood is very loud into EU, even with just a dipole on 40. 80 was very noisy both nights, only did about 50 contacts, 40 had the usual QRM, 20 was the "money" band. Had an opening on 15 on Sunday but not many EU stations took advantage of it even though I begged all who called to put me out on the EU DX Packetcluster. Wound up with 900 Q's and about 450,000 points which would have been 7th place in last year's contest. I was so exhausted from the repair effort that I wound up only operating 24 of the allowed 36 contest hours. Couldn't go through the night either night which hurt my score on 80 and 40. Boy I hate getting old.

The flight home the next day was easy compared to my flight down. The only snag was a 6 hour delay in Newark while Continental waited for a line of thunderstorms to go through. Got home just after midnight.

Bev and I have since reached an understanding about this obsession of mine to contest from the Caribbean. She realises that I will continue to spend significant money and vacation time to do it, I'm just addicted to high rates and working pileups. I've agreed that next year she can come along. She has accepted that I had been right, she certainly would not have had a good time this year. She believes, however, that none of these things would have happened if she was with me, that fate was just getting even with me for not inviting her down!

But, after we kissed and made up, she couldn't resist having the last word. And it was - *"This is what you do for fun? You're nuts".*

PS For those who asked, Windwood will be completely repaired in time for the CQWW SSB. A new Force 12 has been ordered and a T2X is replacing the Yaesu G800S. The CQWW SSB crew is bringing both down and will install prior to the contest.

K5XI STATION DESCRIPTION

The station at K5XI is mentioned in the CQ Amateur Radio Almanac as one of the largest amateur radio antenna installations in the world. One of the towers is 250 ft high and may be the tallest tower ever erected devoted exclusively to the amateur radio service. That tower has hazard lights to warn low flying aircraft!

Four 5-element 20 meter antennas are phased together in a switchable array capable of selecting the top two, the bottom two, or the entire stack. Ring rotators provide 360 degrees of rotation for the three lower antennas mounted on the tower. An 8-element 10 meter antenna is located just below the top, at 245 feet. The 10 meter antenna is also rotated with a ring rotator.

The station also has a small tower with a mounted on it. This is used for DXing on 18 MHz and 24 MHz. Sid has worked all but three countries for DXCC. The only three remaining countries on his need list are Heard Island VK0, the Andaman Islands VU4, and, of course, North Korea P5.

K5XI is often the site for multi-operator efforts in contests. K5XI has finished in the top five in the US in the multi-operator categories of the major DX contests. K5XI (with K7GM and K5RC) won the IARU HF Championship, and finished in first place in the WPX phone contest (multi-single) operating under the callsign NZ5I. We usually have a great out for the ARRL DX phone contest.

The shack has four operating positions, which works out pretty good because you can easily reach over and kick someone if they fail to pass a good multiplier to you. Two more operating positions are available in another room, so you can listen for multipliers without the benefit of listening to the other operators talking!

oooOOOooo

CONTEST RULES

CQWW DX 1996 (CW)

When: 0000Z - 23 November to 2400Z - 24 November.

See Newsletter #103 for SSB rules, which are roughly the same. Phone and CW teams are separate.

ARRL 160M CW 1996

1. Object: The world works W/VE amateurs on 1.8MHz CW only. DX to DX QSOs are not permitted for contest credit.

2. When: 2200UTC December 6 until 1600UTC 8 December 96 - a 42 Hour period with no time limitation.

3. Categories:

(A) Single operator: One person performs all transmitting, receiving, spotting and logging functions.

QRP: 5W or less

Low-power: 150W or less

Highpower: More than 150W

(B) Multioperator: Single transmitter only. Those obtaining any form of assistance such as brief operators, loggers, or use of spotting nets, including packetclusters.

4. Exchange: W/VE: Signal report and ARRL / RAC section. DX: Signal report. Country name is obvious from the prefix Send ITU Region if /MM or /AM.

5. Scoring:

(A) QSO Points: 2 points with QSOs in ARRL/RAC section. W/VE stations count 5 points for DX QSOs.

(B) Multipliers: ARRL/RAC sections plus VE8/VY1 (max of 77) and DXCC countries (W/VE participants only).

(C) Final Score: Multiply QSO points by multiplier.

6. Logs: Entries must be postmarked no later than 30 days after the contest, no late entries will be accepted. You may submit your entry on computer disc, one entry per disc. A summary sheet is required with all entries. Send your entry to: ARRL contest Branch, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111 USA.

ARRL 28Mhz SSB & CW 1996.

1. Object: Everyone works everyone.

2. When: 0000 December 14th to 2400UTC 15th December 96.

3. Categories:

(A) Single operator: One person performs all operating and logging functions. Use of spotting nets (operator arrangements involving assistance through DX-alerting nets, packetclusters etc) is not permitted:

QRP: 5W or less

Low-power: 150W or less

Highpower: More than 150W

(1) Mixed mode (phone and CW).
(2) Phone only.
(3) CW only.

(B) Multioperator: Single transmitter, mixed mode only. those obtaining any form of assistance such as relief loggers or use of spotting nets etc.

4. Exchange: W/VE stations including KH6/KL7 send RS/T and state or province, District of Columbia send RS/T and DC. DX stations including KH2/KP4,etc send RS/T Plus serial number commencing 001

5. Scoring:

(A) QSO points: 2 points for each 2 way phone QSO. 4 points for each 2 way CW QSO. 8 points for CW QSOs with US Novices or Technician stations signing /N or /T in 28.100 - 28.300 only.

(B) Multipliers: 50 US states plus district of Columbia, Canada [NB VE1 or VE9,

NS VE1, PE VE1 or VY2, PQ VE2, ON VE3, MB VE4, SK VE5, AB VE6, BC VE7, NT VE8, YT VY1, NF VO1, Labrador VO2] DXCC Countries except US and Canada, per mode phone and CW.

(C) Final Score: Multiply QSO points by total multipliers (sum of US states, VE provinces DXCC countries per mode).

6. Logs: All entries must be postmarked no later than 30 after the end of the contest. No late entries will be accepted. Entries will be accepted on computer disc. An official summary sheet is also required. Entries with more than 500 QSOs must provide a dupe sheet. Send your entry to: ARRL contest Branch, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111 USA.

Thats it for this Issue, my thanks go to RSGB & Radcom, DXNS, QST, publications for without them much of this info would not be available.

If you are running a contest station and need that extra operator, then let me know, I can do no more. I do hope that you have a good and successful contesting time ahead and look forward to perhaps working/hearing from you. Thanks.

Lastly, if you have anything of interest or information on contesting, then let me know. Apologies for any inconvenience that may have been caused. I do try to keep all info etc, as accurate as possible and up to date but errors do happen.

TECHNICAL TIP

Did your antenna stay up last winter?

Yes?

Well, it's not big enough!!

CONTEST CALENDAR

Ukranian DX	Nov 2 to 3
ARRL Sweepstakes, CW	Nov 2-4
High Speed Club CW	Nov 3
Japan Int.DX Phone	Nov 8-10
WAE DX RTTY	Nov 9-10
RGSB 1.8 MHzCW	Nov 16-17
OE CW	Nov 16-17
OK-OM DX CW/SSB	Nov 16-18
CQ WW CW	Nov 23-24
ARRL 160M	Dec 6-8
ARRL 10M	Dec 14-15
TARA RTTY Sprint	Dec 14-15
Stu Perry Dist.Chall. (160M)	Dec 28-29
RAC Canada Winter	Dec 29
Japan Int.LF DX	Jan 10-12
CQ 160M CW	Jan 24-26
REF CW	Jan 25-26
UBA Phone	Jan 25-26
Delaware QSO Party	Feb 1-2
Dutch PACC	Feb 8-9
Asia-Pacific Sprint	Feb 8
YL-OM Phone	Feb 8-10
RGSB 1.8 MHz CW	Feb 8-9
North American Sprint, CW	Feb 9
ARRL Internat.CW	Feb 15-16
CQ 160M SSB	Feb 21-23
North Carolina QSO Party	Feb 22-23
REF SSB	Feb 22-23
UBA CW	Feb 22-23
YL-OM CW	Feb 22-24
RGSB 7 MHz CW	Feb 22-23
Bermuda Contest	Mar 15-16
BARTG WW RTTY Contest	Mar 15-17
CQWW WPX SSB	Mar 29-30

FINAL FINAL

For those of us who are counting the sunspot cycles with ever increasing anxiety, here's a tale to bring back fond(?) memories.

I REMEMBER DON - 1

By Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD

Twenty seven years ago on June 9th the NCDXC held its monthly meeting at the Fork and Cork in San Mateo. Don Miller was the speaker for the evening. It was possibly up to that time the largest attendance at a Northern California DX Club meeting ever. Ninety four true blue DX types came from far and near to meet Don and hear of his adventures.

It was a time of change though this is probably realised more in retrospect than it was at the time. DXing was going through a major change, things never would be

the same again. It was Don Miller who brought about the changes, he and no one else. He was a superb operator who brought loads of needed DXing and new countries to the Deserving. Just ask any Old Timer about Don but don't stand close. Some are still mad. And they intend to stay that way so just don't argue with them. They were there and they are the ones who bear the scars from those years. It was terrible. Even today some of the elders have difficulty in talking about it.

We first worked Don Miller as HL9KH in Korea where he was a captain in the US Army medical corp. Don Miller was a physician. He was in every contest and ran up

big scores. He would operate a key with his left hand and simultaneously log with his right hand. He was among the best if not the absolutely best operator. Never let anyone tell you anything less about Don Miller.

Back in those days, actually not too long after WWII, DXing was not the 800 pound giant that it is today. It was, as some would often then note, an aberration. The heart and soul of amateur radio was elsewhere. If you really understood, you could find the real meaning of amateur radio in the traffic nets, in the emergency preparedness organisations and all those other good endeavours. DXers were weird. The ARRL DXCC Desk was a minor chord in a minor opus. It

was a peripheral operation and seldom recognised or even understood by the real amateurs.

In those days the ultimate praise for an amateur was: "...he's a good traffic man". When the biennial elections for ARRL directors were held the general consensus was that the one who was "...a good traffic man" came with the highest qualifications. In the ARRL itself all the activity was under the control of "The Communications Department". To study the organisation set-up of the ARRL in those days is to quickly recognise that the ARRL was: 1. The Communications Department: 2. QST and anything else. And DXing was handled by the Com-



Top Cat - Don Miller, W9WNV

munications Departments whose main interest was traffic handling. And don't try to argue on this, this is the way it was. Absolutely. Just don't try to argue with history. You will always lose.

In those days the DXCC desk was primarily interested in the authenticity of QSL cards. Then it was not smart to try to slip any bogus counters past the DXCC Desk. They had their "black light" and any card at all that was suspicious brought a hot warning that any future transgressions would be dealt with by banishment to the outer darkness. And with no avenues of appeal available. Slip--and you were gone. Permanently. There was no argument or opportunity for any explanation.

All amateurs were considered absolutely honest. They had to be or they would not be holders of the amateur license. Normally if you said you were in a country, that was sufficient. Even in countries where amateur radio was prohibited, good DXCC counters could be had from working surreptitious operations. The DXCC criteria clearly said that cards would be honoured from countries where "amateur licenses were not issued in the normal manner". When Benito M. was the Italian tyrant, amateur radio was prohibited. But underground stations were operating from the sacred Italian soil and they were accepted for DXCC. After all, DXers were amateurs and amateurs were honest. If they said they were there, of course they were. They were honest. Perhaps traffic operators were the most honest of all.

In short, DXing was different. Don Miller changed things. It was never the same after Don.

Don got out of the service and took off to make life a bit happier for DXers. He started showing from new countries. Don did his research and compiled a list of places which should qualify for country counters, a good many never have been previously considered as even wild possibilities. Don knew

the rules and he exploited them. He even worked from Okino Tori-Shima long before the JA-jubilee year. His operation there was not accepted.

Don showed from places that had been on the nautical charts for years but which sailors had difficulty in finding a second time. Don showed from places where amateur radio was forbidden. Don showed from places that were practically inaccessible in those days. And Don worked twenty or thirty thousand contacts at every stop. Don was DX personified and no one would dare argue with that premise. There naturally were some malcontents. One has to expect these even in the best of times. Some said that Don was charging for his contacts, that if you were high on the DXCC Honor Roll listing, you were expected to pay accordingly. If you did not help with the great work, Don would have difficulty in hearing your signal.

Some DXers were outraged at this. Here they had this big cloud of aluminium in the sky and all the power the mains could handle and sometimes a bit more and Miller could not hear their signal. But if they used the call of the non-DXing XYL or other members of the family, Don could catch it on the first call. Recognise the fact that working Don using an in-family call did not help with the DXCC counters, it only helped drive up the blood pressure. It was a time when more than one big-gun DXer was driven to the wall. It just was not fair.

Don showed from places like Burma, China, Thailand, Heard Island, Spratly, the Laccadives, Navassa, Serrana Bank, St Peter and Paul Rocks and Chagos and Blenheim Reef. Most of these were either prohibited countries or possibly new ones that Don had discovered. He showed from just about every needed country known and a good many places which had not previously been considered as DXCC possibilities. He proved they were. Don even showed from Minerva Reef, Maria Theresa and Baja

Nuevo. He was everywhere. And the fact that was hard to dispute was that he often mailed his QSL cards for operations right from the country where he had been operating. Who could dispute such clear evidence of his authenticity.

Some in the ARRL started to ask questions, possibly this coming with prompting from some knowledgeable DXers. The easy going, laissez faire days of DXing were nearing an end.

For years you could still trace a record of Miller's activities in the ARRL Country List. These could be recognised in the Deleted Countries List by the notation: "Deleted because of lack of supporting documentation". That happened so long ago that the current DXCC Countries list no longer has such notations. The glow of those happy days and the misery that followed are long gone.

In June 1967 Don was on a grand tour of the states. He worked his way across the country telling of his adventures in foreign lands and the excitement encountered in bringing new countries to the needy Deserving. It was a good show. The NCDXC crowd that heard it that June evening enthusiastically cheered Don at every possible occasion. The opportunities were many.

It was a jammed meeting, far more than the usual dining room could accommodate. The late arrivals had to dine in remote splendour out in the main dining room. From there they could hear the background noise from the good times in the regular meeting room, the voices raised in loud and good cheer. But Don Miller did not forget the DXers in the outer darkness, he came out to greet and shake the hand of every single one of them. Don was the great friend of every DXer. Believe that. A real handshaking DXer!

Then the regular meeting room was jammed as everyone crowded in to hear Don speak. He told of his recent adventures, some of his older and more memorable ones and made

only a passing reference to the troubles developing with the ARRL. There in downtown Newington they just did not get it. Possibly they never would.

Don told of some of his recent operation from the Indian Ocean and especially from the needed Laccadives. This was a needed one for DXers because India would not allow amateur operations there. Don had a fine slide show, he show the approach by boat to the Laccadives, coconut palms sticking up out of the sea. Then there was a crowd of natives waiting on the coral strand, Don assuring the meeting that this was the headman and chief in this part of the Laccadives and he was waiting to welcome Don to his domain.

There were pictures of Heard Island. One showed the glacier covered mountain, Big Ben, that towered behind the old cable station and the old and decaying buildings of the station itself. Don noted one of the more habitable buildings that was the base for his activity. He was careful to note the feed-through connections that brought the old Australian cable service into the building. Heard Island was one the ARRL was moving to disallow.

Don also talked of some of the other stops along the Indian Ocean in East Africa. He told of arriving at one back-water shipping port in a small country to learn that the elder son and heir of the ruler was seriously ill with an arm infection at the inland capital. Don told of immediately gathering his doctor's satchel and travelling through the jungle and across hardly charted mountains all night long, he arrived at the bedside of the sick youngster at dawn. He immediately applied his wide medical knowledge and pulled the youngster through what had promised to be a fatal illness. It was a touching story.

Amateur radio had not been permitted in this backward country but now, as Don told it, the ruler was so grateful for the saving of the

favourite son that he was going to allow Don to operate there any time he wished and that there would be steps taken to lift the ban on amateur radio operations in that country.

Unfortunately, because of the delicate nature of the matter, it was neither feasible nor possible to tell the name of the country at the NCDXC meeting. But as soon as the word was received, Don would be on the way to the new one and the NCDXC would certainly be the first among equals to know. Absolutely.

It was a joyful meeting. Don was cheered and the ARRL condemned. Taking firm action in the Don Miller matter the club had previously adopted unanimously, six ayes and no nays, at a regular meeting a formal resolution advising the ARRL that their actions in suspending credit for some of Miller's operations was premature. That resolution has never been rescinded.

At the end of the meeting a basket was passed around for voluntary contributions to the great cause. The basket was enthusiastically filled with currency. Many were ready to put their money where their trust was. In Don Miller.

Don went east from this June meeting. He had filed a law suit against the ARRL asking for damages for their actions. Actually one of the NCDXC club members, a prominent bay area lawyer, was hired by the ARRL in the team to handle their side of the case.

With all the uproar about some of Miller's operations being disallowed, Don announced a Caribbean tour he was setting forth on. This included a stop at Navassa and some other promised needed ones. The hint was that St Peter and Paul Rocks might be visited.

Navassa was controlled by the US Coast Guard. You needed their permission to land on the island. Don Miller did not get this okay but went to Navassa anyhow. The ARRL said the operation would not be ac-

cepted. Then Don moved onto Serrana Bank and Baja Nuevo. He operated from these needed ones. Then he disappeared for some weeks. No word at all.

Suddenly, there he was. Operating from St Peter and Paul Rocks in the Atlantic east of Brazil. This turned out to be the Achilles Heel of the Miller Story.

Things in the lawsuit got to the deposition stage. That was where the whole thing blew up. It blew up so hard and loud that some of the DXers, the more trusting and faithful ones, never recovered fully their hearing nor their faith in the goodness of mankind. If Don Miller was flawed, the whole world was flawed. Even one major amateur magazine was so shaken that the word was given to never mention that name again in the columns of that publication. The Don Miller photo had been turned to their editorial wall. It probably is still there.

In the deposition stage and under oath, Miller's partner on the trip admitted that they had never been on St Peter and Paul Rocks but actually operated on a boat off the coast of Venezuela and some 1800 miles west of the supposed operation. The legal case blew up.

Don Miller had also been giving depositions when his partner spilled the beans. With this development the taking of the sworn statements was put on hold, some signs that a willingness to settle the whole thing started to show. After some discussion between the lawyers involved, an agreement was signed and the matter more or less was ended.

In some aspects the matter has never ended. The DXing you practice today is largely directed and controlled by ARRL actions taken after the ending of the lawsuit. The good old days of believing in the goodness of man and especially the nobleness and honesty of DXers came to an end. The ARRL issued changes which initially were so strict that foreign amateur associations

protested them most loudly. Eventually things eased up a bit but the basic rule that came forth is that you must be ready to prove some things in an operation, things such as licenses, permission to operate and proof that you were there.

Years ago I got the definitive word right out of the mouth of Bob White, W1CW, who was then running the ARRL DXCC Desk. An effort was ready to go out and put the Spratlys on the air but there was some nagging question on the call sign. They wanted to sign ISIA. A phone call came from Hong Kong asking if that point could be clarified and would the call ISIA be accepted? In turn a phone call was made to Bob White in downtown Newington who phrased his reply so succinctly that there could be no doubt as to his meanings or wishes. "I don't give a damn what call they sign", Bob roared into the telephone, "just as long as they can prove that they were there!"

Who could argue with such clarity?

Inevitably steps were taken to straighten out what obviously had been a misuse of trust. The DX Advisory Committee was the first of several such advisory committees authorised to help the ARRL Board of Directors better understand some of the more exotic practices within amateur radio. Other Advisory Committees followed. The Don Miller matter had found the Board in many instances just unable to comprehend what was going on. Something was but it was not easily understood by a non-DXer. Only a few of the board in those days had any understanding of DXing, most of them were lost when the nuances of the great undertakings were explored. Completely lost. The Advisory Committees were the road to understanding if not to better decision making.

Don Miller persisted for a while but the bloom was off. There were a number of his operations later disallowed, these because of the lack of supporting evidence. In some respects these were ex post facto demands, the

original presentations had been accepted for DXCC credits. Don could not or would not prove the operations had taken place, the ARRL could not prove they were not. Supporting documentation was not forthcoming, the questioned countries were dropped from accreditation.

Some will even yet ask why the Miller caper happened. It happened because of the internal handling within the ARRL of what was then considered a minor activity. In retrospect, many of the more ancient DXers will speak guardedly among themselves of other DX operations which, when carefully reviewed in later years, raised some very strong questions. That time is now long gone but back at the height of the Miller problem there was some talk that the ARRL was concerned that any legal hearings might bring some of the then long gone operations back out into daylight for scrutiny. It appears that the point would be raised that if such operations in the past had been accepted, why were Millers questioned when these others had not been.

In short, it actually was a situation that had developed over the long years. Don Miller brought it to perfection. He had the skills and the willingness to travel. He did his home work. Unfortunately he started cutting corners. One who accompanied Don on some of his later trips even said that he got lazy. Even when a legitimate operation could have been mounted with no great effort, it was felt that the happy DXers back home would never know the difference in that the operation was not from where it was claimed, so why go to all the trouble. Often he did not.

Don Miller should be remembered for the big changes that were wrought within DXing by his activity. He made it what it had never been before and possibly has not been since. It was perhaps an early full time effort. A "World Propagation Study" it was called. It the brightest star in the DXing fir-

mament. He blazed out along the way. did happen once, it is doubtful if something like this could ever happen again.

Some will still always be ready to denounce Don Miller yet some of the castigators probably have QSLs from him which gave them new DXCC counters and new countries. Others denounced Miller because they felt then, and still do, that their trust in him was betrayed. Even today over a quarter century some cannot find a good word to say about him. Yet others will still remember him as superb operator who could figure out places that would count for new countries. There are plusses and minuses all up and down the line.

But that night at the NCDXC meeting at the Fork and Cork there was little dissent or little disbelief shown. Perhaps the only word whispered aside was: "With all those photos of the Laccadives and Heard Island, how come none of them show Don Miller in the picture?" A good question.

Some time when the times are slow and someone talks about the Miller years, ask what operations actually were nailed by the ARRL as frauds. It may be surprising even yet to some but it does seem that the St Peter and Paul Rocks was the only one. The other Miller efforts that were deleted were on the basis that the requested supporting documentation had not been supplied.

In later years a lot of things went wrong for Don Miller but that in itself is another story. For some years he was

After twenty five years it may be well to remember what happened, how one can trust and lose and how one of DXing top operators fell from the pinnacle.

And above all else, remember that DX as you know it today has a lot of it's earmarks and parameters directly traceable to Don Miller and what he did.....and what he claimed he did but did not.

I REMEMBER DON - 2

Herb Asmussen, GOWAZ/OZ7SM

When I lived in Hong Kong from 1960-1971 I was not able to get a licence in the early years. However, as secretary of the HARTS (Hong Kong Amateur Radio Transmitting Society) I was able to activate the club call VS6AJ at my QTH in late 1963. When reciprocity came I got my own call VS6AD.

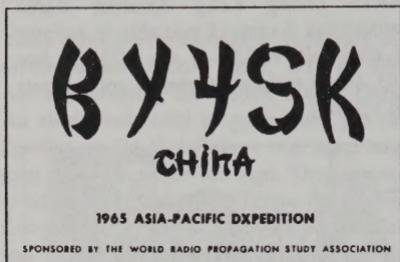


l-r XW8AU, W9WNV, VS6AJ (GOWAZ)

A frequent visitor was Chuck Swain, XW8AU, who was working in Vientiane for Air America, a sort of fly by night CIA or Pentagon operation. During one visit Chuck brought along Dr. Don Miller, W9WNV. I was fascinated by Don's operating skill both on SSB and CW. He would copy 3-4 calls in the pile-up, send with one hand, write in the log with the other and chit chat at the same time!

He made a lot of DXpeditions in the Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean and South East Asia. Unfortunately, quite a number of them were bogus! One of them I know for sure, although I am a bit ashamed of not having uncovered it at that time. It was the BY4SK operation. Don revealed from somewhere in SEA that he was sending radio equipment to a polish engineer who was building an electronic factory in South China. The pole would pick up the gear in Hong Kong. That should have alerted me already, as I was quite familiar with China as I had lived there for close to four years, prior to settling in

VS6. Anyway, BY4SK came on the air, but only on CW and he would answer both CW and SSB calls. My CW was not up to Don's speed, and when he came back to me, he slowed down without me asking for QRS!



Later he said the QSL cards were Post Restante at the Kowloon Post Office. I volunteered to pick them up, but he protested violently! A few weeks later he visited my shack again and went pale when he saw a DF receiver. He regained his original colour when I told him it was for top band only!

I received the QSL card (above) later and it was written so that it was ambiguous

whether it was to VS6AJ or VS6AT! Also the quality of the paper could never have come from China at that time.

On another occasion Don came through Hong Kong and asked me if I would buy his Collins 30L1 linear, which I did. Much later a director of the ARRL, a W0, visited me and asked me about Don and the amplifier. I told him that I had paid with a bank draft in US\$ issued to Henry Radio, so Don did not cheat at this point. However, I told the W0 that the easiest way to establish the facts of the BY operation would be to have a look at Don's passport, as it would be stamped on entry and exit in Hong Kong! When Don was asked to produce his passport, he said that he had lost it! That was enough proof for me that he had been transmitting illegally from somewhere in the New Territories. I could kick myself for not tracking him down there.

I do not know whether he still is in jail, but for me one thing is sure: he was the world's best ham radio operator, regrettably he was also a criminal, but I was impressed.

For various reasons, putting this issue together was panicky at times not - not to mention sweating on the DXCC info from QST, which was a bit of an anticlimax when it arrived, plus a couple of urgent chases around the country after rare birds (for those who didn't know, Ruth and I are "twitchers")! However, somehow we made it. Incidentally, just because a deadline is stated on the front cover, don't feel you have to wait until 2 seconds to midnight on that day to send in material! Hi! The next issue is already underway so any contributions which are not time-conscious should be sent NOW.

Very many thanks to those who contributed to this issue

See you in the pile-ups

Vy 73 de Bren, G4DYO

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